Second Edition.

REPORT

OF THE

DEBATE

IN

The House of Commons of Ireland,

ON THE BILL,

PRESENTED BY THE RIGHT HON. HENRY GRATTAN,

"For the further Relief of his Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic subjects."

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

AN APPENDIX:

CONTAINING,

THE CATHOLIC PETITION,

AND

AN AUTHENTIC COPY OF THE BILL

WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF DEBATE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

REPORT

OF

THE DEBATE

ON THE SECOND READING OF

THE CATHOLIC BILL,

MAY 4th, 1795.

THE order of the day being read——The SOLICITOR GENERAL roſe. I own, ſaid he, tho' I have been long in the habit of addreſſing this Houſe, that I feel ſome agitation at preſent, when I conſider the magnitude of the ſubject which I am about to venture in the firſt inſtance to diſcuſs, and which now engages the attention of the parliament of Ireland. I am glad, however, that it is at length become a ſubject for the diſcuſſion of parliament, and it would perhaps have been well for ſome purpoſes, if it had engaged the attention of parliament at an earlier period; but however late it offers itſelf, I am ſure it will be decided on with wiſdom.

I hold in my hand a copy of the bill, which has been preſented by the Right Honorable Member, and though I riſe at this early ſtage of the debate, I hope the Houſe will not think that I have any intention of arrogating to myſelf more than belongs to an humble individual, who participates in the common concern which moſt deeply affects us all.

If I felt that any matter was impoſed upon me other than what was congenial to my own feelings and ſentiments, and to the duty of an Iriſh gentleman, I truſt that the Houſe know me well enough to think that I would decline the taſk.—This ſubject is not a novel one: yet it is but fair to ſay, that the great and only difficulty of the diſcuſſion, is to make a fair and ſimple narrative of the real ſtate of the caſe, which I ſhall now attempt by the aid of hiſtorical facts, recognized and ſanctioned by the legiſlatures of Great Britain and Ireland, co-operating to form the great model of our conſtitution, to aſcertain thoſe principles to which we are mutually pledged, which attach us to a common centre, which form that indiſſoluble compact, which is the great bond of our connexion, and on that broad and firm baſis ſhall I reſt all that I mean to offer. Though this bill profeſſes to be "for the further relief of his Majeſty's Roman "Catholic ſubjects, &c." and though it might ſeem to contain more ſubſtantive clauſes than thoſe to which the attention of the Houſe will be naturally drawn, I ſhall not embarraſs the Houſe by going into the diminutive circumſtances and their probable conſequences,

but ſhall diveſt myſelf of all thoſe leſſer conſiderations, which ought not to interfere with your attention to the great object.

The Right Hon. member, and every gentleman will perceive that when I allude to thoſe parts to which I do not wiſh to direct your attention, I mean that clauſe which takes away the neceſſity of any qualification or having or uſing arms. The qualification in force is that of the nature of 1793, of only two years ago; it was then thought a moderate and reaſonable one, and I remember, that in the diſcuſſion on the bill, many gentlemen were anxious to have it ſtill greater than it was then enacted.—Another is the laſt clauſe of the bill, for giving to Roman catholics in the army a free right to attend their divine ſervice. The reaſon I wiſh to diveſt myſelf of the conſideration of the clauſe is, becauſe I am bold to ſay, that there never was a more unneceſſary clauſe introduced in any bill.

I will not impute to the right hon. gentleman any unkind, unfair, inflammatory deſign, to irritate the feelings of any ſet of men; but from my own knowledge, and the fulleſt enquiry and intelligence I have been able to obtain, it never happened, ſave in one unfortunate inſtance which became a ſubject of enquiry, that any circumſtance occurred to render ſuch a clauſe at all neceſſary. So much, ſir, for the two clauſes of the bill, the one taking away the neceſſity of any qualification to bear arms; the other providing againſt a ſeverity which never exiſted, and both of them calculated to arm the beggary and inflame the bigotry of the nation. Having thus diſembarraſſed the queſtion, I am to call your attention to the moſt important ſubject, that was ever agitated in this country—a ſubject reſolving itſelf into one ſingle queſtion, "Whether you will leave a "trace of that conſtitution eſtabliſhed by what I will ever call the "*glorious revolution*?" What is the bold and prominent feature of this bill? it profeſſes to give every Roman catholic permiſſion to ſit in either houſe of parliament, and amounts to a diſpenſation from taking any of thoſe oaths, or ſubſcribing to that declaration which you will find embodied in the Bill of Rights at the time of the ſacred compact between King William and his parliament of Great Britain, which was ſoon afterwards recognized as extending the bleſſings of that glorious revolution to Ireland, has been acted upon ever ſince, and recognized by ſeveral ſtatutes; by one ſo lately as the year 1782, when you yourſelves enacted the ſame oaths in the law which is dignified by the name of that great man, and excellent lawyer, Lord Chief Baron Yelverton, and which paſſed under his auſpices in the memorable æra of the Duke of Portland's adminiſtration.

It would not be treating this Houſe with proper reſpect to be tedious in an hiſtorical detail, which I ought to ſuppoſe every gentleman here acquainted with; but as ſuch dull taſks often fall to gentlemen of my profeſſion, I ſhall with brevity enter upon it. It is hardly neceſſary to mention that before the reformation many ſtruggles took place on account of foreign ſupremacy in matters eccleſiaſtical: every body knows that they often affected the good order of England, and the peace of Europe, and with how little ce-

remony

remony that ſpiritual ſupremacy, when ſucceſsful, transferred crowns and ſceptres. From the hiſtory of the world, and moſt particularly from that of our own country, we have learned that the civil government can never endure ſo formidable a rival as a ſeparate and independent eccleſiaſtical dominion, ſuch as is claimed by the tenets of the Roman catholic church. The ſpirit of civil liberty had long fought againſt it—and the prince or parliament who would admit it now, would ſacrifice that which had been ſtruggled for through ages, would hand back the government to the power of prieſts, would leave them to work upon your counſels, by confeſſion and abſolutions, would blaſt the prerogative of the crown, would hurl you from your ſphere, and ſeperate you from Great Britain and her conſtitution. Every body knows, that after much diſturbance and blood, this conteſt came directly to iſſue in the time of Henry VIII. when the crown of Great Britain, under the authority of parliament, and backed by the ſenſe of the nation, aſſumed its own authority in ſpiritual matters; that in every ſucceſſive reign the ſame ſtruggle exiſted more or leſs until the revolution, that fatal period to the Stuarts, when a prince preſumed to diſpenſe with the eſtabliſhed laws, to introduce that power againſt which the kingdom had ſo long contended, and to overturn the proteſtant religion as by law eſtabliſhed. Different oaths of ſupremacy had been enacted at different periods, and from time to time modified by the authority of the legiſlature—in theſe Henry had been called the ſupreme head—Elizabeth ſupreme governor of the church; but at the period of the revolution, when theſe qualifications were aſcertained and modelled out of regard to the opinions of the diſſenters, to whoſe feelings it was not conſonant to call the King ſupreme head or governor of the church, a modification of the oath was adopted and embodied into the famous Bill of Rights.

In that great record is contained the compact between the prince and the parliament, after ſetting out the ſacred obligation againſt eccleſiaſtical ſupremacy, by which they bind themſelves, on theſe terms *they offer* and the *King accepts* the crown; what is the compact? The law enumerates the many and various miſchiefs which had occurred during the reign of James II. from diſpenſing with the oaths of ſupremacy, and then proceeds to ſtipulate for their future obſervance, ſetting forth the oaths; the very oaths which you are deſired to abrogate. It is obſervable that before the compact was formed, and before they made a tender of the crown to William and Mary, who were by their coronation oath to be bound in the ſame terms, they ſhew the obligation:—for it was natural for King William to ſay before he would become the protector of their religion and liberties, "I beg to know whether the com-"pact and obligation be reciprocal?" By the ſame ſtatute it was made neceſſary on the part of the King and Queen to ſubſcribe the declaration preſcribed by the act of Charles II. "to preſerve the "King's perſon and government, by diſabling papiſts to ſit and vote "in either houſe of parliament."

From that period, *thus* has reſted the conſtitution; and ſuch was the ſolemn compact received and acted under by both kingdoms from the revolution to the preſent time.

Before I come to the Iriſh ſtatute, let me call your attention to the act for ſettling the ſucceſſion to the crown, by which the whole of this ſyſtem is recognized as the great ſecurity of the religion, laws, and liberties of the country. I am conſcious that in this detail of facts I cannot catch attention ſo much as the ſubject demands; but having undertaken the diſcuſſion, I ſhould not think myſelf juſtifiable in any omiſſion. The convulſed and diſtracted ſituation in which Ireland was left by James after his abdication, with a variety of other circumſtances, prevented Parliament from ſitting here until the 4th of William; and in that interval the Engliſh legiſlature enacted a law, ſince adopted by Ireland, by which the oaths which I allude to are a part of our law. And what was the conduct of the firſt parliament in Ireland after the revolution? The members, before they took their ſeats, took the oaths of ſupremacy and allegiance, and ſubſcribed the declaration as ſet forth in the bill of rights; and the firſt law paſſed by them was the act recognizing their Majeſties title; which act recites, 'that Ireland is for ever united to the crown of England, and the King ſhould enjoy the juriſdiction, prerogative, and authority thereof.' It recites our delivery from popery and arbitrary power, and then recognizes the title to the crown of Ireland, with all its prerogatives and juriſdictions, as incorporated, united, and annexed. It is abſolutely neceſſary to recur to hiſtory for ſome account of that conſtitution which you are about to retain or part with this night.—It will not be contended that a King of England can reign over his Engliſh ſubjects by one rule of conduct, and over thoſe of Ireland by another; nor will any one ſeriouſly argue that it is competent for his Majeſty, without the concurrence and advice of his parliament of England, to alter and new model the compact under which he holds the crown of Great Britain, and of this imperial realm, or to abſolve himſelf from that compact, or alter any part of that compact, by which the other component parts of the legiſlature are bound as well as himſelf, without the united concurrence of thoſe powers from whence the obligation flowed, and who alone are competent to diſſolve this fœderal and ſolemn ſyſtem of connexion.

I have ſtated theſe facts to ſhew that this compact moved from men who thought it neceſſary to bind themſelves, that the compact might be concluſive and reciprocal. On the faith of this compact the parliament and the people of Ireland recognized the title of William to the crown, and with it the obligation of theſe oaths, which oaths and obligations, in Yelverton's memorable act of 1782, are particularly recited, adopted, and embodied into the Iriſh code. The title of that law is—*for extending the proviſions of an act, entitled, an act confirming all the ſtatutes made in England.*—And it recites *that, by an act made* 10 *H.* 7. *all ſuch ſtatutes as concerned the common-weal of the realm, were confirmed in this kingdom.*—And it recites, *that during the rebellions of* 1641 *and* 1688, *many ſtatutes were made*

made in Great Britain which affected Ireland; and that whereas a similarity of laws, manners, and cuſtoms, ought to ſubſiſt between Great Britain and Ireland, it enacts, amongſt other things regulating the commerce and property of Ireland, *that all ſuch clauſes and proviſions contained in any ſuch ſtatutes as relate to the taking any oath or oaths, or making or ſubſcribing any declaration or affirmation in this kingdom, or any diſability for omitting the ſame, ſhall be accepted, uſed, and executed in this kingdom, according to the preſent tenor of the ſame.* —Here then is the renovation of the compact, and the ſolemnities which enſure it at the memorable æra of the reviſion and renovation of our conſtitution, in which the right hon. member (Mr. Grattan) had ſo diſtinguiſhed a ſhare.

I have hitherto confined myſelf to the conſideration of this ſolemn compact thus made and ratified—I ſhall now obſerve, that the wiſdom of the parliament of Great Britain has not thought proper to releaſe his Majeſty or themſelves from thoſe engagements in which we are equally bound; from which, however, the bill in my hand goes to releaſe members of either houſe, or perſons to be appointed to the ſeveral great offices herein enumerated and detailed moſt accurately—a detail, which I muſt ſay I think unneceſſary, for five lines would anſwer the purpoſe, by ſaying expreſsly, that "notwithſtanding any law, ſtatute, or uſage to the contrary: notwithſtanding the Bill of Rights, notwithſtanding any connection or compact with Great Britain, be it enacted that the oaths of ſupremacy, &c. and all laws to enforce the ſame be henceforth null and void." Thus, notwithſtanding the ſeries of legiſlative acts of both countries, in aſcertaining and ſecuring our conſtitution, and (in the language of the Bill of Rights) *our religion, laws and liberties, from the danger of being ſubverted*; notwithſtanding the religious ſolemnities, by which the prince as well as his parliaments have been bound to maintain them, let all be pronounced to be—

The baſeleſs fabrick of a viſion.

The aſſimilation of laws in matters of imperial concern, is the principal bond of our connexion—the departure from the principle muſt tend to ſeparation.

But when it is ſought to withdraw us from this ſolemn compact, to eſtabliſh by law a foreign ſupremacy, and to annihilate all the ſtatutes which I have recited, it becomes matter of ſerious conſideration. It has been, and may again be ſaid, that the temporal power of the crown will remain entire, notwithſtanding this innovation.—Were this a matter never before diſcuſſed, I ſhould have little difficulty in refuting this opinion; but when every part of our hiſtory is full of the detail of blood and maſſacre, the conſequences of the ſtruggle for temporal power, we ſhall not be at a loſs for a full refutation of this aſſertion; and as I go along it is my ſtudied and determined purpoſe, not to ſpeak of the Roman Catholics but with the higheſt reſpect—I have lived in habits of as much intimacy and regard with many of them, as any gentleman

who

who hears me—and believe I am near the hearts of many of them. But I will firmly tell the Roman Catholic that it would be a misfortune to him to change that conſtitution under which he is protected, and civil liberty has been nurtured;—and that he has no right to demand it, nor have the crown and the parliament, who are but truſtees for its preſervation, a right to alienate what has been confided to them as a truſt.

I have wiſhed to put this queſtion on a ground which has nothing to do with the principles on which the claims of the Roman Catholics have been hitherto decided. From the firſt relaxation in 1778, the hiſtory of this houſe has been a hiſtory of benevolence, kindneſs, good will and affection from parliament to the Roman Catholics: but in that period there appears no trace of any infringement upon the great boundaries of the conſtitution;—and I rely on the wiſdom of the houſe, not to intrench on thoſe land-marks which equally demark the conſtitution of Great Britain and Ireland. I know it has been induſtriouſly aſſerted, that the Roman Catholics are in a humiliating and degraded ſituation; I know that factious and ſeditious men made uſe of that untrue and unfounded aſſertion, to deſtroy the good order of the country: and I feel it neceſſary to undeceive the Roman Catholics, as far as I am able, to bring them back to a ſenſe and knowledge of the bleſſings of law, and the comforts of tranquillity. In 1778, property in chattel intereſts was conceded to them; in 1782, the inheritance of the land was opened to them; and down to 1793, ſcarcely a ſeſſion paſſed without recognizing the ſame principle of kindneſs towards them; and at this day, they are under no more reſtraint as to property, than Proteſtants are.—The act of 1793, emanating from the crown, and paſſed under the auſpices of a miniſter of as great conſideration and worth as ever ſat in this houſe, was not accordant with the ſentiments of ſome of the moſt illuſtrious characters of the country; that act was declared to be an act of conciliation, it was declared from high authority to be intended as ſuch, and from that period it was hoped that the queſtion would be at reſt, and the country in tranquillity. At that time certain gentlemen ſought to extend the bill to the length of the preſent one; but the wiſdom of parliament rejected the propoſal by a great majority. Has any great circumſtance occurred ſince to juſtify this important alteration in the legiſlative ſyſtem? Is the houſe prepared to ſay what effect the breach will have upon the ſiſter country, (equally a partner in the compact,) if the bill is ſucceſsful; or if it ſhould fail, what effect it will have upon our own people, too eaſily agitated by diſcuſſions which they do not underſtand? I know and reſpect many Roman Catholics of large and opulent property—men by whom I would be proud to ſit in any aſſembly—men who I would be far from wiſhing to render unhappy or uncomfortable; but when they ſeek to ſit in parliament, I would ſay that I would not bend the conſtitution to a compliance with their prejudices, if they are ſuch as preclude them from

from accommodating to the conſtitution.——There are not I ſuppoſe in Ireland fifty Roman Catholic gentlemen who would ſeek to ſit in Parliament, or who have the remoteſt appetite for the buſtle of public life: it is not from men like theſe that the clamour now raiſed can come—they are too loyal—too decorous—too well affected to the conſtitution, to raiſe ſuch an outcry as has produced outrage in the remoteſt corners of Ireland, or to inflame the peaſantry, who aſſemble in thouſands becauſe of the mountebank abuſe of the word *emancipation*, which they have accepted as a ſignal for commotion, and which they are taught to think, means the lowering the price of land!—I have ſaid thus muſt to ſhew how little intereſt the deluded peaſantry can have in this bill, which they are ſuppoſed to ſeek; and to ſhew, that notwithſtanding the boaſt of three millions of Roman Catholics being anxious on the ſubject, not above fifty can really deſire it, and not a fifth of that number have a proſpect of advantage from it. Is this then a caſe that calls for a ſurrender of a great principle that muſt lead to the danger I have ſtated? I know that the Roman Catholic peaſantry, from their peculiar ſituation, are reſorted to, from time to time, as inſtruments in the hands of others for very dangerous purpoſes, in inſtances where they were not at all concerned; and that the uninformed multitude, *manu quam conſilio promptiores*, have been the tools of ſedition. On a great ſubject of this kind, I will ſpeak without flattery or fear; they are both the offſpring of meanneſs and falſehood—the bold language of truth becomes every member of this houſe—and I will ſay, that the *bugbear* of three millions being involved in a queſtion of fifty wiſhing to become legiſlators, and that the kingdom is therefore to be convulſed, is monſtrous and diſgraceful [a general cry of hear! hear!]—and yet this is the ground on which we are called on to renounce every claim to Britiſh connection!—This ſubject has not originated with the opulent or reſpectable Roman Catholics, but with factious bodies of men, who, under the cloak of ſanctity and a zealous affectation in the cauſe of God, have no ſcruple to convulſe their country, and ſend the conſtitution to deſtruction. Be aſſured, Sir, that I do not wiſh to treat this ſubject with unbecoming levity, but I beg to remind the houſe, that innovators have, at various periods of our hiſtory, aſſumed a ſimilar progreſs, by endeavours to ſcoff at the religious ceremonies which the law had adopted as the teſt of political attachment.—If you will give me leave, Sir, I will read a paper that has been thought worthy of a place amongſt the tracts of the great Lord Somers, that puts the indecency of thoſe attempts in a ludicrous point of view. The paper I allude to imports to be an addreſs to king James II. from the Atheiſts, or ſect of Epicureans, and runs as follows:

"*To the King's Moſt Excellent Majeſty.*

"GREAT SIR, Since men of all factions and miſperſuaſi-
"ons of religion have preſented their thanks, for your Majeſty's
"gracious

" gracious declaration of *liberty* of *conſcience*, we think ourſelves " obliged as *gentlemen* to bring up the rear, and become *addreſſers* " too. We are ſure there is no party of men more improved and " advanced by your *indulgence*, both as to principles and pro- " ſelytes of *England*; and our cabals are as full as your royal cha- " pel; for your unlimited toleration has freed the nation from the " troubleſome bigotries of religion. Your Majeſty's univerſal indul- " gence hath introduced ſuch unanſwerable objections towards all " religion, that many have given over the troubleſome enquiry " after truth, and ſet down that eaſy and happy inference, that all " religion is a cheat: in particular, we can never ſufficiently con- " gratulate and admire that generous paſſage in your Majeſty's gra- " cious declaration, wherein you have freed your people from the " ſolemn ſuperſtition of oaths, and eſpecially from thoſe ſlaviſh " ceremonious ones of ſupremacy and allegiance; and are pleaſed " to declare, that you expect no more from your people, than what " they are obliged to, by the ancient law of nature; and ſo have " bravely given them leave to *preſerve* and *defend* themſelves ac- " cording to the firſt chapter of nature's *Magna Charta*. Your " Majeſty was pleaſed to wiſh, that all your ſubjects were of your " *own religion*, and perhaps every diviſion wiſhes you were of " theirs; but for our parts, we freely declare, that if ever we " ſhould be obliged to profeſs any religion we ſhould prefer the " Church of *Rome*. We ſhall never ſcruple the adoration of an " image, when the chiefeſt religion is *but* imagination: and we are " willing to allow the Pope an abſolute power to diſpenſe with all " penal laws, in this world and in another, and free the world from " the fear of *hell* and *devils*, the *inquiſition* and *dragoons*, and that " he would take off the *chimney money* of *purgatory*, and *cuſtom* and " *exciſe* of *pardons* and *indulgencies*, which are ſo much inconſiſtent " with the flouriſhing trade and grandeur of the nation. As for " the engagements of lives and fortunes, the common compliment " of *addreſſers*, we confeſs we have a more peculiar tenderneſs for " thoſe moſt ſacred concernments, but yet we will hazard them in " defence of your Majeſty, with as much conſtancy and reſolution " as your Majeſty will defend your *indulgence*; that is, ſo far as " the adventure will ſerve our deſigns and intereſt.

From the Devil-tavern, *the fifth* of November, 1688.
Preſented by juſtice Baldock, *and graciouſly received.*"

Be aſſured, Sir, I do not mean to trifle with the ſerious feel- ings of the houſe, the importance of the ſubject, and my reſpect for you, ſhould oblige me to proceed with deliberative caution and reverential awe on this ſolemn occaſion of a debate over which you preſide with ſuch authoritative wiſdom.—I beg to obſerve, that this diſcuſſion is not to be confined to matters of mere religious ce- remonies, but that it goes to matters which directly tend to over- throw the practical authority of the government. By the princi- ples of our conſtitution, the appointment of judges, the aſſembling of

of councils, and regulation of eccleſiaſtical juriſdictions, flow from the crown. If a foreign intervention, whether from the Pope or from eccleſiaſtical councils, which are of equal notoriety and authority, were to be authoriſed by law, they muſt have their eccleſiaſtical courts to decide the property of the country by ratifying or annulling wills and marriages, they muſt have ſynods and convocations, and thereby elude your convention act: your laws, liberties, and religion, which have hitherto gone hand in hand, would be ſeparated and disjointed, and one would not long ſurvive the other But in truth, Sir, this has been by no means a religious conteſt.—The ſcruples of the Catholics were in the gradual progreſs of accommodation to the forms of the conſtitution, of whoſe power they deſired to participate, and to the ſentiments of the legiſlature, to whoſe liberality they had been grateful.

The ſubtle poiſon of that democratic phrenzy which infected neighbouring countries, unhappily interrupted the ſalutary effect of your councils.—The ſtatute of 1793 had, with a magnanimity unknown in this country for a century, enacted, that Roman Catholics ſhould not from thenceforth be liable to any forfeiture, diſability, or penalty, ſave ſuch as his Majeſty's ſubjects of the Proteſtant religion are ſubject to. And it took off reſtraints which then affected, and ſtill affect, other of his Majeſty's ſubjects.—The aſſertion then, that the Roman Catholic was a degraded ſlave, was the reſult of preſumptous ignorance, or audacious falſehood. But ſince the beginning of the French revolution, a new power has been erected in this country by cabals, committees, councils, and meetings, which for a time bearded parliament itſelf. It appeared principally in that body of men, whoſe wrath I myſelf incurred in view of this aſſembly, for an affront offered to the omnipotence of the United Iriſhmen—thoſe United Iriſhmen took upon them the management of the Roman Catholic cauſe—their publications were bound up with thoſe of the Catholic committee—they appeared in armed array, with all the inſignia of rebellion, with French names and French devices, parading the ſtreets of Dublin—and it has in the end turned out as I ſaid in this aſſembly, that nothing leſs than *high treaſon* was hatching, and their plan has ended in the fate of that man who was buried yeſterday with all the honours of *high treaſon*, attended by the leaders of that very ſociety.—By the manlineſs and wiſdom of Lord Weſtmoreland's councils theſe attempts were checked—an appeal was made to the honour and ſpirit of Ireland: I call upon you to imitate that manlineſs and wiſdom, and with perfect philanthropy and ſteady firmneſs ſupport the conſtitution.—Though this is the firſt time parliament has diſcuſſed this queſtion, it has been diſcuſſed before in other places.—Give me leave to ſay, that you are called upon to aſſert your own conſequence.—The inſolence with which it has been attempted to overawe your free diſcuſſions, has been arrogant as it was miſchievous; but however a ſhort lived power may have been abuſed, however the loyalty of the Catholics may have been defamed, when it has been raſhly aſſerted, that their claims were only to be controuled by arms,

arms, I truſt that the ſpirit of your deciſion, and the loyalty of the people's deportment, will refute the wanton calumny againſt both.—I will not allude to certain publications, or ſpeak of any great character not now in the country; the letters attributed to him, and which do leſs honour to him than they do to me, I have every reaſon to hope are not authentic—it is a ſubject I ſhall not dwell upon; but I will conclude by ſaying, that I truſt the gentlemen of Ireland will prove that they are not affected by noiſe and clamour, but when the conſtitution is attacked, that they will ſay with the bold Barons, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*.—I move that this bill be rejected.

Right Hon. D. BROWNE ſaid, he was ſorry he was not in the houſe when the Hon. Gentleman began the ſtatement with which he prefaced his motion. The Hon. Gentleman had ſtated a reſolution of the Commons of England in the reign of William and Mary; that reſolution probably ſuited thoſe times—it has nothing to do with the queſtion before you: it is not from the ſituation of the Catholics, in 1690, you are to reaſon, but from their ſituation in 1795. I agree with the Hon. Gentleman, that that reſolution is not to be argued as if a large proportion of our fellow-ſubjects were ſlaves; no, Sir, the Catholics of Ireland have great and valuable privileges, dear to them, and beneficial to the State; the queſtion ſimply turned on this—is it neceſſary you ſhould remove the reſtrictions on the Catholics (for penal laws there are none) to complete your conceſſions; or, ſhould you ſtop where you are for the ſecurity of your eſtabliſhment?—As ſhortly as I can, Sir, I will ſtate to you the opinions I have formed on this ſubject: I owe the ſtatement to my conſtituents and to myſelf. The policy of the Legiſlature in 1778 allowed the Catholics to acquire property in Ireland; if it were neceſſary to keep them in political ſubſervience, you ſhould not have granted them that privilege, becauſe property and political ſubſervience are not compatible with each other. The conceſſions of 1793 followed the conceſſions of 1778; as of courſe you admitted the Catholics fully to the conſtituent body of the State; you opened to them the profeſſion of the law with the exception of office of King's Counſel and Judges of the land; you admitted them to your army, to the rank and command of regiments, but you refuſed them the rank of General; you gave them the power of holding Revenue Offices, except the office of Commiſſioner: with this grant of privileges, the moſt liberal that has been made to the ſubject ſince the period of Magna Charta, you blended a refuſal of the power of ſitting in either Houſe of Parliament. This is preciſely the political ſituation of the Catholics of Ireland. The bill of the Right Hon. Gentleman goes to remove thoſe reſtrictions and diſabilities: If it ſhall appear that they are not neceſſary for the ſecurity of the eſtabliſhment, they ought not to remain, becauſe ſtrong neceſſity alone can juſtify political diſabilities, becauſe ſuch are incompatible with that national concord and collective induſtry that can alone advance the proſperity of a State, becauſe they are cauſes of diſunion always operating injuriouſly and always finally conceded: but, Sir, if it ſhould appear that your grants, as they

they ſtand, are incompatible with your reſtriction, and even dangerous to the State without removing the reſtriction, there will be little doubt that they ſhould not remain for a moment on the face of your ſtatutes. This is the ſtrong point of view in which this queſtion preſſes on my mind. The Catholic has the power of voting for Members of Parliament, but he cannot be a Member of Parliament himſelf. It was urged againſt this conceſſion, that it would make the Catholics, from their numbers, the conſtituent body of the ſtate: If this be the caſe what have you done by your law? you have created ſeparate intereſts between the conſtituent and the legiſlative body; the Catholic will be able to find a profligate Proteſtant, whoſe only merit with him will be enmity to your eſtabliſhment; thus you would have the conſtituent body warring with the ſtate, inſtead of being, as they ſhould be, an integral part of it: you give them the gradations of the army up to the rank of Colonels of regiments, but you refuſe the power of being Generals and of heading your armies. Do you think military ambition will ſtop in the Catholic juſt where you wiſh it? no, when you have trained him to arms, with the knowledge of your ſoldiery and your country, he will leave your ſervice, and he may command againſt you; either he will be an efficient officer, or he will have military ambition—in the one caſe he is uſeleſs, and in the other dangerous. You allow the Catholic the profeſſion of the law, and you refuſe him the power of advancement. Study makes him informed, and profeſſional exertion makes him eloquent; you refuſe to ſuffer the information and the eloquence that your law has created to be uſed for the ſupport of the conſtitution, therefore it will be turned againſt it; you will have him the eloquent advocate of the traitor, becauſe he cannot be the ſervant of the State. If it was neceſſary to grant the indulgence of holding revenue employments to the Catholics, and yet to prevent their having influence in that profeſſion, you miſtook in what you gave and in what you refuſed; you ſhould have allowed them to be commiſſioners, and refuſed their being guagers, for it is the inferior revenue officer that has influence, not the Commiſſioner. The dangers I have heard urged in private converſation and in debate, that would ariſe to the eſtabliſhment by allowing the Roman Catholics to ſit in Parliament, and be Judges of the land, the repeal of which are the principal features of this bill, appear to me to be wholly unfounded; the apprehenſion is, if you admit the power of the Catholic being elected to Parliament, from their numbers they will become the majority of the Parliament, and overturn the Proteſtant Eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate—not as the Parliament is conſidered now; 64 members are returned for counties, the remaining 236 for cloſe boroughs and free cities; the landed property in the counties is as forty-nine to one in the hands of the Proteſtants. How many counties of Ireland would return Roman Catholics merely for their religion? Is it ſuppoſed that in thoſe days religion has more weight than property in the cloſe boroughs? Their religion, we all know, would not make much way for them in the free cities of the kingdom, which form a very conſiderable

ſiderable part of the repreſentation. This principle might at firſt have ſome weight; I will not pretend to aſcertain, as the conſtitution or parliament ſtands now, how many Roman Catholics would get into parliament; but the number would be certainly ſo ſmall as to make fear from their power ridiculous. It may be admitted that this would be the caſe as Parliament ſtands now, but that the Catholic influence would force what is called a reform in parliament, and then, from their numbers, they would be the parliament:—See how this probability ſtands. The only change that could be in the conſtitution of parliament, would be taking the repreſentation from the cloſe boroughs and giving it to the counties in ſome ſhape or other; in ſuch a caſe it would be more difficult for the Catholic to come into Parliament than as the conſtituent body ſtands now, for in ſuch a change the return would be thrown entirely from the monied and commercial intereſt to the landed property, which the Catholics have ſo ſmall a portion of. According to the preſent ſyſtem of repreſentation, ability and money would weigh wherever in the conſtituent body there was neither ambition or avarice; an able and an informed Catholic would be preferred to a ſtupid Proteſtant, a rich Roman Catholic would be preferred to a poor Proteſtant; but in county repreſentation it would be no ſuch thing, landed intereſt and connexion alone would weigh. As to the danger of their changing the church eſtabliſhment for their own, according to the premiſes I have laid down they would not have the power of doing it; if it was merely to change one church eſtabliſhment for another, if they had the power, I do not think they would feel that individual intereſt that has operated on them in the exertions they have made and are making; and if they would pull down the church eſtabliſhment with the view of pulling down all eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, then they have not the ſtrong religious prejudices that we are told ſo much is to be feared from.—Now, Sir, as to the laſt, and I muſt own not the leaſt important part of this conſideration, whether the preſent temper of the times is not againſt the changes? whether a State ought ever to yield to threats or to violence? I know it ſhould not; I know that ſuch conduct is unſafe either for bodies politic or individuals; and could I connect the Catholic cauſe with either the threats of Dublin, or the inſurrections of the country, I would think that the meaſure, however neceſſary and right in itſelf, was inexpedient at preſent; but, Sir, I deny the connexion between the Catholics of the kingdom and the ſedition of Dublin; I aſſert that the inſurrections of the country are no way connected with this queſtion: the object is plunder and property; paſſing this bill would not ſtop it, refuſing it would not increaſe it. I conſider this to be a meaſure for the general advantage of the conſtitution, and for the ſpecial benefit of the Catholic nobility and gentry: their humble advocate I am proud to be, becauſe I know them, becauſe I think that, dealt with wiſely and liberally, they would be ſupporters of your conſtitution, as they ever have been; they would have no intereſt in a change, and they would not conſequently wiſh for it; if you wiſh to ſeparate them

from

from the ill-affected, it is practicable, by removing the diſtinction. The turbulent and the ſeditious are only heard of in agitations—in tranquillity they are forgot and deſpiſed. To conclude, Sir, what is aſked, in my mind, ſhould be granted as material to the union, peace, and well being of the kingdom, as right in itſelf and expedient.

Lord KINGSBOROUGH.—It was my wiſh to ſecond the hon. gentleman's motion, and to give a few reaſons for my conduct. This bill is to take the power from the Proteſtants to give it to Catholics. For nineteen years that I have ſat in Parliament, I have voted for every indulgence being granted to the Catholics except the elective franchiſe, to which I objected upon account of its conferring political power: I have been a ſteady friend to the Catholics; but I never would give up the Proteſtant intereſt, or take any ſtep to deſtroy the Church of Ireland. I own, Sir, that the conduct of many of the Catholics has been ſuch of late as not to encourage any man to grant them any further conceſſions: not that I mean to caſt reflections upon the whole body, for I have the honor of being acquainted with many Catholics of the moſt reputable character, and who would be an ornament to any nation; but of late the country has been diſturbed, and I think thoſe diſturbances ariſe from the conduct of perſons belonging to the Catholic committee; I allude particularly to their clubs and meetings, and to a circular letter of Mr. Edward Byrne, about two years ago, informing the Catholics, " that they were to be turned out of their " farms to make room for Proteſtants," ſo great was the ſpirit of electioneering. The poor people in Connaught, thus deceived, in order to prevent this, attacked the Proteſtants, robbed them of their arms, plundered and murdered them. In the South, ſome diſturbance took place on the ſame account; ſome of the rioters acknowledged, that perſons had come from Dublin ſwearing them to riſe and puniſh the Proteſtants for *intending* to turn them out of their farms.—The United Iriſhmen, and the Catholic committee, who are, I believe, one and the ſame body, joined in exciting miſchief in the country, by publications and ſpeeches endeavouring to raiſe rebellion. What was their language in Francis-ſtreet chapel?—" to *ſeparate* the two countries—that Ireland, but for the Britiſh " connexion, would be happy, and of ſome conſequence in the " world," &c. They called on the ſoldiers to deſert their King and country and ſupport them! When the common people hear ſuch language from thoſe from whom they expect truth, is their conduct ſurpriſing? I have attended the Aſſizes in ſome of the diſturbed counties, and I have there become acquainted with ſome of the efforts uſed to inflame the minds of the people, by hand-bills and emiſſaries ſent down for the purpoſe, informing them of grievous taxes which were to be laid on that never exiſted but in thoſe publications, and in the minds of thoſe incendiaries—(the committeemen and the United Iriſhmen) who framed them. Theſe are the cauſes of the diſturbances.—I ſhould be ſorry to give up the power of the Proteſtants to ſuch attempts to bully the legiſlature—I would cheerfully

cheerfully loſe my life and property in ſupport of the conſtitution in church and ſtate—and I do not deſire to live longer than they continue to exiſt.

Mr. COOTE expreſſed his anxiety to have ſeconded the motion to reject the bill, and that he was equally gratified that it was ſeconded by his noble friend (Lord Kingſborough) than whom no perſon felt a more animated zeal for the good of the country.—He implored the Houſe to pauſe, and to well weigh the conſequences of giving to the Roman Catholics the power and government of the country: he wiſhed to have the advantage of experiencing the effects of what has been given, before more is conceded; if conceſſion upon conceſſion, and favour heaped upon favour, have failed to give content and ſatisfaction, he was convinced the preſent bill would not do it; on the contrary, it would produce new demands, and ſuch as would, if ever ſurrendered, completely annihilate the conſtitution. They will firſt call for a reform in Parliament, and unleſs this ſhall be conceded, the bill will give them but an empty and deluſive benefit: they will expect a ſupport and eſtabliſhment for their clergy, which it might be good policy and wiſdom to give, if it can be given without doing miſchief to the Proteſtant church eſtabliſhment; but will the Houſe ever conſent that their Biſhops ſhall ſit in the other Houſe of Parliament—a demand that will grow out of the preſent bill? He therefore thought the bill to be the ſource of endleſs jealouſies and diſcord.—He hoped the *time* would never arrive, when Catholic power ſhould govern Ireland—if it ſhould, there will ſoon follow a ſeparation between the two kingdoms: Great Britain and Ireland muſt ſeparate, becauſe a Proteſtant government in England, and a Catholic one in Ireland can never co-operate, or act in union and harmony. He therefore warmly and earneſtly called upon thoſe, who wiſhed to preſerve the connexion between the two countries, and who felt that Great Britain and Ireland ſhould ſtand and fall together, to reject this bill. He cordially wiſhed to the Roman Catholics the enjoyment of every comfort and happineſs; and this they now had—for, Mr. Speaker, authority like yours, could beſt tell the Catholics of Ireland that they have at this hour equal liberty, equal peace, and equal ſecurity with the Proteſtant. The queſtion at this moment is clearly, whether we ſhall continue to be a part of the Britiſh Empire, or whether we ſhall be a Roman Catholic people and government? Compare the ſtile and manner of the petitions before us, with that of the petition preſented in the year 1776—that petition, ſigned by the moſt reſpectable and richeſt Catholics in Ireland, intreated a mitigation of the penal laws from his Majeſty, and from Parliament, as a favour, and not as a right: there now is introduced into their petitions, a word and a manner that ought to rouſe the Houſe to reject this bill; and he dwelt much on their new-adopted word—*Reſtore*—and declared, that if we *reſtored* rights and functions upon petitions ſo conſtructed, and ſo worded, upon what principle ſhall we hereafter refuſe to *reſtore* lands and eſtates?—That this new form and ſtile of their petitions ought

ought to awaken our vigilance: why do they preſerve ſchedules and records of property? and that a map he had in his hand, which marked out the names of the old proprietors of property, ought to convince us why they do preſerve them.—He read from a volume of Parliamentary debates, the objections that had been made to the Catholic bill in the year 1792, by a reſpectable member of great character and ability (Mr. G. Ponſonby)—" That bill did not pleaſe him, becauſe the meaſure was not glanced at in the Lord Lieutenant's ſpeech, nor any communication on the ſubject made to the gentlemen of the country." That there appeared ſome inconſiſtency in the conduct of gentlemen, in and out of power; for who were they who had been conſulted before this meaſure was moved this ſeſſion? They were the Catholics of Ireland, and not the Houſe of Commons, or thoſe who ought to have been conſulted. He was therefore moſt decidedly againſt this bill, and would have oppoſed it with the ſame warmth under the laſt, as under the preſent government, as being replete with danger and deſtruction to the conſtitution, and as leading to the greateſt of misfortunes, a ſeparation between Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. M. FITZGERALD ſaid he would ſtate as ſhortly as poſſible, a few reaſons which induced him to ſupport the bill, and as he wiſhed to give his ſupport from the juſtice of the cauſe, and not from the abilities of its advocates, he wiſhed thus to precede thoſe gentlemen whoſe talents would that night illuſtrate the ſubject. He had heard, he ſaid, no argument againſt the bill which had made any degree of impreſſion on his mind; but the general tendency of what had been ſaid, appeared to him reducible to the probable danger which this bill would occaſion to our political inſtitutions and our religious eſtabliſhment, by the admiſſion of perſons profeſſing hereſy. He would not conſider the catholics as they ſtood at the time of a diſputed ſucceſſion, but as they were now entitled to legiſlative favour by their loyalty. As to the political inſtitutions, he thought they would be as ſafe in the hands of the catholics as thoſe of any other ſet of men; they had the ſame attachment to liberty and the bleſſings of a free conſtitution as proteſtants had. As to our religious eſtabliſhment, no man was more ardent than he felt himſelf in defence of it; and as he felt the fears, with reſpect to its danger, moſt ſtrongly, ſo was he moſt anxious to remove this objection: the catholics were too enlightened, their loyalty too ſteady, and their attachment too well tried, to ſuppoſe that they would ſeek to deſtroy that religion, which would, in its overthrow, involve our civil liberties; and if their clergy ſhould be ſo ambitious as to deſire its overthrow, he was ſure they would meet no aſſiſtance from the laity; but their clergy would not deſire it, for they well knew that this was no day for any unuſual aggrandizement of church eſtabliſhments, and that the utmoſt they could do was to preſerve themſelves by the mildneſs of their adminiſtration; and though he had heard it ſaid that they deſire to ſit upon the epiſcopal bench in the houſe of peers, he had never heard from the catholics any thing but a complete diſavowal of any ſuch expectation;

pectation; and he believed, that amongſt their enlightened clergy there was a very ſtrong reaſon for this conduct—that they would not wiſh to hazard the maintenance and ſupport provided for them by a very meritorious bill now before the houſe, (Mr. Pelham's bill) to forward any project of ambitious aggrandizement.—Mr. Fitzgerald then proceeded to ſtate the conduct of the catholics from their firſt relaxation in 1791, to their preſent application; and concluded his ſpeech, by declaring his oppoſition to the motion for rejecting the bill.

Sir H. LANGRISHE ſaid this was a queſtion of ſuch magnitude, one which had ſo many years engaged his thoughts and employed his exertions, that he could not remain ſilent, when it was offered to the conſideration of parliament; at the ſame time he felt a painful anxiety, leſt what he ſhould take the liberty to ſubmit to the Houſe might not be altogether conformable to the ſentiments of thoſe, from whom perſonally, or politically, whether he conſidered their private qualities or their public principles, he muſt feel it a misfortune to differ upon any occaſion.

However, not only the importance of the meaſure itſelf, but the variety of ſentiment it has excited, renders it neceſſary that we ſhould meet it with a full and free diſcuſſion; and, I think, ſaid he, the more we examine it with temper and impartiality, the more we communicate our thoughts upon it, without yielding implicitly to the dominions of ancient prepoſſeſſion on one ſide, or without ſuffering our minds to be alienated from the general queſtion, by the preſumptuous phraſe of intimidation, aſſumed by a few deluded, if not diſaffected, men, on the other.—The more, I ſay, we conſider this meaſure detached from every thing that can tend to inflame paſſion, or revive prejudice; the more, in my opinion, we ſhall diſcover, that the apprehenſions entertained concerning it are imaginary, and the objections to be unfounded. Whatever may be the determination of parliament at the preſent juncture; if the Roman Catholics perſevere in their former good conduct; if they are not ſeduced from their intereſts and their duty, by the impulſe of their paſſions, or the artifice of deſigning men, I do not entertain a doubt in my mind of the ultimate accompliſhment of what I ardently wiſh, "That all thoſe religious diſcriminations, which have ſo long divided, and ſo often diſturbed this country, ſhould be utterly aboliſhed." But I do not found the confidence of my hopes in any powers of coercion—God forbid!—The notion of the coercion of parliament, and the ſubverſion of the ſtate, is one and the ſame idea. I would rather caſt from my mind every fond prepoſſeſſion in favour of any part of the community, than become an acceſſary in the deſtruction of the whole. Rather abandon any meaſure, however ſalutary; however congenial to the conſtitution, than ſee it purſued by means tending to its ſubverſion.

My reliance for ſucceſs is founded in the force of reaſon; the perſuaſion of policy; the growth of benevolence; and the extinction of prejudice. I look for ſucceſs to the perſevering loyalty of the Catholic, and experienced liberality of the Proteſtant;—I look

to the benignity of a gracious ſovereign, and the wiſdom of a parliament that have granted ſo much already.

As to the general ſyſtem of the Popery laws, ſo long as I have been able to form an opinion on any public ſubject, they have appeared to me to be neither ſound in policy, nor juſtified in principle; inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of equal benefit and equal controul, which is the perfection of all human government, and the peculiar pride of our happy conſtitution; and if my humble efforts in their mitigation have at any time been limited in their extent; if they did not at all times ſatisfy the impatience of purſuit, it was becauſe I thought it neceſſary to compromiſe with the temper of the times; to conſult conciliation rather than conteſt; accommodation rather than atchievement; for I always thought (and I think ſo ſtill) that we ſhould aſſimilate, in order to incorporate; and that conceſſion and conciliation ſhould go hand in hand; and therefore, Sir, when the Roman Catholics come forward, under the title of loyalty and obedience to the laws, to ſolicit a participation of common privilege and common condition, it is with no ſmall degree of indignation that I ſee any part of their body, however ſmall, however inconſiderable, betrayed into an intemperance, that may appear to juſtify their former opponents, or tend to alienate their old friends; if not to alienate, to render them impotent in their ſervice. For myſelf, I declare, if I thought ſome of their recent publications were a faithful repreſentation of their principles or their purpoſes; if I were not convinced that that is not the fact, I ſhould not think myſelf juſtified in ſtanding up their advocate at this day; but I am convinced they have been traduced by ſome of their orators and ſome of their hiſtorians, and under that conviction, and that only I act.

Certainly, Sir, the laws, ſo far as is conſiſtent with ſubordination and the order of good government, ſhould, in their operation, be equal and indifferent; if poſſible, like the ſun, they ſhould "ſhine upon all alike." However, where there had been a long privation of light, prudence required that the reſtoration of it ſhould be adminiſtered by gradual proportions, otherwiſe it might operate rather to dazzle than to direct; rather to wound the organ, than illuminate the object.

But after 80 years of general enforcement, and 20 years of gradual relaxation, it is reaſonable that we ſhould conſider at leaſt with a temperate mind, whether any juſt cauſe ſubſiſts which ſhould induce us to retain even a remnant of this ſyſtem.

At the ſame time that I expreſs (as I have always done) my diſapprobation of theſe laws, it is but juſt that we ſhould look to their origin, as well as their operation, in which view, although I diſapprove the principle, I cannot cenſure or animadvert on our anceſtors for having adopted them. There was ſomething ſingular and critical in the conjuncture that preſſed forcibly on the temper and condition of their time, which was their apology, if not their juſtification.

The unfortunate monarch, James II. who paid the forfeit of his crown to the laws and conſtitution which he had violated, was ſtrongly impelled to this violation by his devotion to the Roman Catholic religion. He ſacrificed the laws on the altar of his faith.

When he abdicated the crown of England—when another monarch was placed on the throne there—and when, by the laws of Ireland, he was no longer king of Ireland, he came over to this country, where the majority of the people being Catholic, either forgot that he was no king, or embraced him as a martyr. They flew to his ſtandard, forgetting in the ſympathies of their faith, the conditions of their allegiance.

In the ſubſequent ſucceſſes of king William, great landed forfeitures enſued, which forfeitures were undoubtedly founded in juſtice and the laws of the country; becauſe, as the ſtatute of Henry the Eighth (and a happy ſtatute it was for Ireland) declared the king of England *ipſo facto* king of Ireland; the adherents in arms to any other perſon, in oppoſition to that title, were guilty of treaſon, and ſubject to the penalties of forfeiture.

Thus our laws pronounce on the forfeitures by reaſon of the rebellion of 1688.

But the animoſities natural between the victorious and the vanquiſhed—between thoſe who had relinquiſhed and thoſe who had acquired, muſt have been acrimonious; and the laws that were made at that period, were not only compoſed in the temper of that controverſy; but they were calculated to defend theſe forfeitures from the majority of the people, by rendering the majority of the people impotent in the ſtate.

This is the impartial ſtory of thoſe laws.

Whether our anceſtors were juſtifiable or not in the extent of theſe prohibitions; whether the ſpirit of legiſlation exalted or degraded itſelf by thus rigidly retaliating on the violators of the old laws; whether the law, that had been trampled upon by James, ſhould, in the reign of William and of Anne, like a wounded ſerpent, have turned back on its aſſailants, with ſuch a poiſonous malignity.—Whether theſe proceedings were juſtifiable or not, we are not called upon at this day to determine; but we are called upon, as rational and diſpaſſionate men, to conſider whether in juſtice, in policy, in the public proſperity, we can trace any good cauſe for perſevering in this ſyſtem, or any part of it; and in this inveſtigation, we ſhould not be influenced by the heated imagination of a Biſhop King on one ſide, nor the inflammatory declamations of a modern democracy on the other.

I remember, about 30 years ago, we firſt began in parliament to queſtion the juſtice and the policy of thoſe laws; our efforts were then unſucceſsful; but we ſowed the ſeeds that have been ſince ſo happily productive.

The conceſſions to the Catholics in 1774, 1778, 1782, 1792 and 1793, are well known to you, and, I truſt, they live in the remembrance of the Roman Catholics.

Having,

Having, in the firſt place, granted them a power to confirm by the authority of an oath, that allegiance which their conduct had proved for near a century; you reſtored them "to the acquiſition and enjoyment of all perſonal property, and to the exerciſe of their religion." Then to "the rights of purchaſe and inheritance in fee-ſimple; to the exerciſe of learned and lucrative profeſſions; to the benefits of education and the endearments of intermarriage; and, finally, to a ſhare in the adminiſtration of the ſtate, by the exerciſe of the elective franchiſe, and a capacity to hold all offices, civil and military, under the crown, ſubject only to a few exceptions."

This is your career of conceſſion! and, I muſt ſay, it was a great and magnanimous ſacrifice of ancient prejudices and excluſive rights, to general benevolence and national proſperity.

What now remains as the object of further conceſſion? Little indeed! Nothing but to repeal the few exceptions in your former grants; thoſe proviſoes limiting in extent the operation of principles, which you have already decided;—nothing but to offer a pledge of confidence to the ariſtocracy of the Roman Catholics, by reſtoring the full exerciſe of that power, which ſhould be inſeparable from the property you have already given; and which property is an hoſtage for the due exerciſe of the power it confers.

To ſuppoſe that men who enjoy every thing under the ſtate, will combine againſt the ſtate, is an irrational preſumption; and to give men property, without giving them the power naturally attached to it, is as abſurd as to give them the enjoyment of the ſun, and endeavour to preclude them from its light or its warmth.

The Roman Catholics have acquired conſiderable property; they have a great proportion and proprietorſhip in the iſland; and are therefore bound by every motive that can affect the principles or the paſſions of men, to the proſperity of the country, and the ſtability of its government. Beſides, permit me to obſerve, that amongſt the propenſities univerſally attributed to their tenets, a devotion to *hereditary monarchy* has always been conſidered as predominant. To this, perhaps, of old, they owed their misfortunes; to this, in the preſent time, they may look for a reſtitution to their ſtation in the country.

That we ſhould by common rights and common intereſts; by equal laws and equal protection, engage every member of the community in the protection of the whole, is a maxim ſo ſound in policy, and conformable to conſtitution, that any deviation from it can only be juſtified or accounted for by ſome preſſing neceſſity indeed.

The exiſtence of that neceſſity in the preſent inſtance, has, I do confeſs, been urged with much weight by men of great conſideration, great abilities, and great liberality of mind.

But how juſtly ſoever we may reſpect their arguments, we are bound to examine them; how highly ſoever we may eſtimate *their* opinions, it is upon *our own* that we muſt act; and, for myſelf, I muſt ſay, I can diſcover no ſuch neceſſity.

We have been told, "that the exercise of a Catholic power in the state is incompatible with, and must be subversive of, a Protestant establishment."

That I deny! The establishment formed at the Revolution, was an establishment for the *whole empire*, consisting of ten or twelve millions of people, the great majority of which were Protestant. Its basis therefore was a Protestant King, a Protestant Church, and the King at the head of that Church. And however independent this country is, and ought to be in the powers of legislation, it is inseparably united to England, by the bonds of a common sovereign, who is bound by the most sacred obligations to maintain this establishment. Now, Sir, I say, the Irish Catholics united have not the power (and your liberality has not left them a temptation) to overturn this great palladium of your constitution; this fundamental principle of the Revolution. The connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, which hangs upon this, is so essential to both, that its dissolution would be the extinction of both. The Catholic creed does not go to these objects!

The Catholics swear, "that the Pope of Rome has no temporal jurisdiction within this realm,"—and they have never denied, that there is an established church, and that the king is head of the established church.

As for themselves, they admit their reference to a foreign prelate on articles of faith, and the discipline of their worship; but that such is paramount to their civil obligations;—that it can dispense with oaths, absolve allegiance, or cancel faith with hereticks, they utterly deny, on the solemnity of their oaths; a sanctimonious reverence for which has been the sole foundation of their past disqualifications. If the authority of their oaths were not conclusive on them; if they could be dispensed with, they need not solicit the bill now before you.—The oaths that attach them to the established government and the state are as strong as our own.

They swear "Allegiance to the King, and to maintain the succession in his family.

"That they detest and abjure the doctrine, that it is lawful to injure any man under pretence of being an heretick.

"They disclaim the infallibility of the Pope, and his power to remit sins, or absolve them from their allegiance.

"They solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present church established, for the purpose of substituting a Catholic establishment in its stead."

And they swear "they will not exercise any privilege to which they are or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion and Protestant government in this kingdom."

The most jealous state that ever existed, could not require a stricter conformity to the principles of its establishment, than what I have recited.

In times of ancient darkness, when pontifical ambition could look to general dominion, the decretals of councils, and the dispensations of the church were, I do admit, employed as the delusions

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of popular ignorance, and the inſtruments of temporal power. Great calamities followed from the controverſies that enſued; and, I muſt ſay, all religions, when from ambitious motives they are led under the banners of bigotry, are almoſt equally cruel. Calvin burned Servetus at Geneva; Queen Mary burned Cranmer at London—even the mild Bramins on the coaſt of Coromandel murdered St. Thomas at his devotion; becauſe, by the force of his girdle, he removed a great beam that obſtructed the harbour of Meliopore; by which miracle he converted to chriſtianity Sagamo their king, and thereby ſhook the foundation of their profeſſional power.

But in the preſent temper and condition of the world, apprehenſions from the ſpiritual ſupremacy of the Pope, appear, to my underſtanding, but as the dreams of prejudice, and the ancient decretals of councils, which we have heard ſo much of, like the Sybil's leaves of old, are now ſcattered about by the winds, and no man is found ignorant enough to gather them up.

The Pope of Rome is an inoffenſive unaſpiring prince—endeavouring (and I hope his endeavours will be crowned with ſucceſs) to maintain the permanency of his little temporal dominions, from the rapacity and infidelity of his neighbours; and, in my mind, the references of the Catholics to him at this day on the articles of their faith, or the ceremonies of their worſhip, no more concern the government of the country, than the different ſtates of ancient Greece were affected by the various journies of their ſeveral people to conſult the oracle of Apollo in the iſland of Delphos.

Our ſtatute laws againſt appeals to Rome; the ſtatute againſt proviſors; the act of faculties, and ſuch like, were made upon a different occaſion, and for a different object.

Before the reformation, when the ſeveral ſtates of Europe were unſettled, and ſubject to frequent convulſions; it was the cuſtom of the times for the different monarchs to appeal to the deciſion of the Pope of Rome, ſometimes againſt each other, ſometimes againſt their own ſubjects, and ſometimes for their ſubjects to appeal againſt them. This practice, favoured by the blind zeal of the times, threw a power into the hands of an aſpiring prelate, formidable to every ſtate in Chriſtendom.—To reſiſt which evil in theſe countries, the reformation took place; and theſe ſtatutes were wiſely made "to prevent appeals to Rome againſt the king, or without his licence (as it is ſpecifically expreſſed) to guard the prerogative of the king, as head of the church."

But when the papal power became circumſcribed, and ſuperſtition extinct, the object of theſe laws became extinct, and cannot at this day be conſtrued to go to references on caſes of conſcience, on articles of faith, or the rituals of any tolerated religion.—But I have heard it ſaid "the Catholics of Ireland differ from the Catholics of every other country."

Upon what ground that aſſertion is made I cannot conceive, unleſs it be that "ſome of their anceſtors, attached to a Catholic prince, forfeited their eſtates, which they wiſh to get back again." Now even this circumſtance is not peculiar to Ireland; the landed

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property of almoſt every country in Europe is forfeited land, acquired by the victorious from the vanquiſhed, and by the former divided amongſt their adherents.

But as to the notion of reclaiming theſe lands in Ireland, of recovering them for the deſcendants of thoſe who had forfeited them 150 or 100 years ago; which deſcendants are not at this day to be traced through the mendicancy of the country; and that, by diſpoſſeſſing thoſe whoſe length of poſſeſſion for above a century, is in itſelf a better title than thoſe who forfeited could probably adduce (they could not have had a better);—and which forfeited lands are at this day, by purchaſe, become a great part of the wealth of the Catholics themſelves.—I ſay, ſuch a notion is a viſion of too baſeleſs a fabrick for any young man to ſee, or old man to dream.

No, no, Sir, the Catholics of Ireland know (what every man in the world muſt know) that if, in our evil deſtiny, this country were to be conquered from its connection with England; our lands would not be the endowment of the ancient proprietor or his deſcendant, but the plunder of the foreign adventurer. We might then ſay, with the Roman ſhepherd, "*Oh! barbarus miles hoc habebit.*"

And as to the notion of their attachment to a Roman Catholic prince, that is a matter out of all calculation or debate. The object of that attachment is at an end; the family is extinct, except in the perſon of an old cardinal, whoſe ſacred profeſſion, and extreme age, preclude all poſſibility of a ſucceſſor.

I ſhall only treſpaſs further on your patience, to obſerve upon one argument more, which I have heard on this ſubject.

It has been ſaid, "that a parliamentary reform (as it is called) muſt be the conſequence of your agreeing to this bill."—If I could foreſee ſuch a conſequence; if I could be perſuaded that this meaſure would be auxiliary to that tremendous notion of innovation; that raſh experiment on eſtabliſhed rights, and ſettled happineſs; that deluſive project of a repreſentation, unknown to our conſtitution, and ſubverſive of its principles.—If I could conſider this meaſure as conducing to ſuch an event, I would not heſitate a moment to give it my decided oppoſition.

But I cannot ſee how admitting ſome of the Roman Catholic ariſtocracy into the foremoſt ranks of the conſtitution, ſhould inſpire them with a wiſh to alter or to ſubvert it. If the Roman Catholic gentlemen were admitted to an equal capacity of ſitting in parliament with the Proteſtant, I cannot ſee what ſhould induce a diſcrimination of ſentiment between them concerning this ſubject; but if they were to be deluded into ſuch an enterpriſe, their energy would be loſt. When the Roman Catholics, under the title of their loyalty and ſubmiſſion to the laws, ſolicit to be received into the boſom of the conſtitution, they have great weight from the reaſonableneſs of their pretenſions; but if afterwards they were to come forward, deſiring that the conſtitution, which had juſt embraced them, ſhould be altered, or accommodated to their fancy;

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their demand would be ſo unjuſtifiable, that, with all their numbers, they would be impotent.

I know very well that ſome men, more devoted to turbulence than toleration, have, by a ſuſpicious connection affected to make *common cauſe* with the Roman Catholics, in order to apply the authority of their numbers, and of the juſtneſs of their cauſe, to their own dangerous projects. I know very well too, that in the great body of the Catholics themſelves, ſome may be found of ſuch a turbulent ſpirit, as conceſſion would not conciliate, as privilege would not ſatisfy, or tranquillity delight; but in the former inſtance, the artifice is too obvious to be dangerous; in the latter, it would be unfair to judge the many for the crimes of the few.

I have addreſſed myſelf to every argument which has occurred to me; and I have expreſſed my ſentiments with impartiality at leaſt on this great ſubject.

I cannot be alarmed by dangers that have long ſince paſſed away, nor will I combat ſuperſtitions, which I know are obſolete. We have nothing to fear from the people; we have already placed them in ſuch a ſituation, as that they muſt perceive (if they are not blind to the condition of the world) that no political alteration can improve their condition; that no part of the terraqueous globe can furniſh them with ſo good or happy a government as their own.—As an enthuſiaſt to the Engliſh conſtitution, I would purſue the ſpirit of equal benefit and equal controul, that rational principle of *Engliſh equality*, to the utmoſt extent of ſpeculation; that the people may be led, by the compariſon, the more to deteſt the *equality* of the *French democracy*; to which, if they turn their eyes, they will ſee not equal rights, but equal wrongs—an equality, not of property, but of poverty. There is not a man in France, nor in any country which they have conciliated or conquered, whom it has not impoveriſhed; the rich are plundered, and the poor are not enriched; the fountains are dried up that uſed to ſupply the wages of induſtry; the ſpeculations of commerce; the recompence of induſtry; or, the endowment of genius. The common beggar has loſt his inheritance in the bounty of the affluent; the whole is general depreſſion, univerſal degradation.

It is as if the lofty mountains and aſpiring cliffs were to ſtoop their heads, to be tumbled into the vallies; it would make the face of the earth level—but it would be a level of ſterility; no more diverſified by alternate production and ſhelter. I will not ſay, with the poet, "the cloud-cap'd towers, and gorgeous palaces, the ſolemn temples are *diſſolved*," but they are *fallen*! as if by their proſtration to overwhelm the land they were accuſtomed to ſhelter and to adorn.

I beg pardon, Sir!—I cannot touch on this barbarous romance without emotion, nor can I avoid touching on it when it falls in my way. I would refer this contraſt to the contemplation of my countrymen; but their own good ſenſe muſt have anticipated me.

The preſent bill goes ſtill further to diſplay the contraſt; to illuſtrate

luſtrate the diſcrimination; and if I had no other reaſon, I would agree to it on that account.

I think it inoffenſive to the eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate, as ſettled at the revolution; and it is recommended by this peculiarity, "that it would give ſatisfaction many years before it can come into operation."

Mr. RUXTON ſpoke a few words in favour of the bill.

Rt. Hon. Mr. PELHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ſhall endeavour to follow the example, and attend to the recommendation of the right hon. Baronet near me, by a cool and diſpaſſionate inveſtigation of the queſtion before us; for I confeſs, Sir, that I entertain no other feelings upon this ſubject, than ſuch as ariſe from that zeal and animation which are inſeparable from warm and ſincere attachment to the conſtitution in church and ſtate, in defence of which I am willing to join with a noble lord behind me, to ſpill the laſt drop of my blood, and ſpend the laſt ſhilling of my fortune, though I am aware that the laſt pledge may be conſidered as falling very ſhort of what has been offered by him.

I am deſirous of offering myſelf to your attention, and that of the houſe, before the impreſſion, which the ſpeech of the right hon. baronet may have made, is done away. But before I enter upon the queſtion at large, I muſt congratulate the houſe and the country, upon the diſplay of talents which appeared in the honourable member (Mr. Fitzgerald) who preceded him. They are ſuch as reflect honour upon him and upon thoſe he repreſents, and I truſt, that by a frequent exertion, the public will reap the full advantage of them. But, Sir, as the hon. gentleman is lately come into parliament, he will excuſe me if I addreſs a few words to him by way of caution upon this ſubject. He has conſidered and argued the queſtion with the ingenuouſneſs that characterizes youth, and he naturally wiſhes that thoſe who have aſſiſted him in acquiring that privilege and honour he now enjoys, ſhould be in a ſituation of being admitted to the ſame honour, and he is confident that they will defend the conſtitution with the ſame zeal that he entertains himſelf. Sir, he will allow me to repreſent to him the danger of conceding upon a principle of conciliation, and of giving too much credit to the notion of preventing future, by granting the preſent demands; I might requeſt him to take experience from our own time, and conſult the hiſtory of his country, or if I ſtate to him an hypothetical caſe which he may find not totally without precedent in the annals of parliament, it will not be altogether unworthy of his attention.

If in his reſearches he was to find, that a venerable and reſpected member of parliament, who could ſtate that he had been above thirty years a friend to the Roman Catholics, and conſequently could ſpeak with a degree of authority as to their opinions and intentions, which few or none but himſelf could pretend to, ſhould ſay upon an occaſion ſimilar to the preſent, that any thing that touched

touched upon the conſtitution muſt be reſiſted, that even to them, (meaning the catholics) the principles of the conſtitution could not be given up; and that rather than endanger that conſtitution, under which we all derived ſo much happineſs and ſuch ſolid advantages, he would perſiſt in thoſe reſtrictions, the repeal of which he now joined in demanding. If, Sir, I ſay, he ſhould find a perſon ſuch as I have deſcribed, who after ſuch pointed and poſitive declarations, ſhould in the courſe of two ſhort years be drawn into a belief, that the conceſſions which he had ſhewn to be ſafe, were merely a prelude to ſuch as were dangerous, and that former meaſures conſiſtent with our ſecurity, were merely a ſtep to other meaſures, which muſt break in upon that conſtitution he had ſo ſtrenuouſly defended from all encroachment; ought not the hon. member to feel ſome alarm at the confidence he has entertained for the future ſecurity of the conſtitution after the paſſing of this bill? I am ſure that, poſſeſſing thoſe talents we have with ſo much pleaſure ſeen diſplayed this night, he will not think me unfriendly to him, if I wiſh to prevent thoſe talents being hampered by improvident pledges, or being betrayed into aſſurances, which the moſt experienced have not been able to maintain.

I wiſh moſt ſincerely that this queſtion ſhould be fully and fairly inveſtigated, becauſe I am anxious that the deciſion which this houſe may form to-night, may give ſatisfaction to proteſtant and catholic, by convincing them that it has been deliberate and well founded.

I ſhall not enter into the detail of the different clauſes of the bill, but meet the queſtion fairly upon broad conſtitutional grounds; and Sir, I ſay, that the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy, and the declarations accompanying them, cannot be diſpenſed with without an infringement of the conſtitution as eſtabliſhed at the revolution, and endangering the proteſtant church eſtabliſhment, which formed a principal and integral part of that conſtitution.

If you admit the Catholics into the legiſlature, you muſt do more, you cannot ſtop there; and I aſk the houſe whether they are prepared to introduce a popiſh in the room of a proteſtant church eſtabliſhment. For myſelf I am free to ſay, that if the parliament in political power becomes catholic, the church eſtabliſhment ought to be of the ſame perſuaſion. We are not at the moment when we can properly decide which of the two perſuaſions is beſt; though I am free to ſay I have my partialities, and I am not aſhamed of owning, even in this philoſophic age, the principles of my faith, of acknowledging my attachment to chriſtianity, and my perſuaſion that the proteſtant profeſſion is the beſt. There are men, I know, who think lightly of eſtabliſhments, and ſay that no inconvenience would ariſe from the admiſſion of the papiſts into parliament, becauſe they acknowledge that the diviſion of the church revenues which would be the neceſſary conſequence, would be no diſadvantage; and they are ready to admit what muſt inevitably follow, that all eſtabliſhment would ſoon decay, becauſe if two exiſted, men would

would contribute to neither, and they would be probably in that ſtate of variance which would make them deſtroy each other.

Sir, I muſt acknowledge that theſe diſcuſſions are not entirely new to me, for long before I had any notion of having the honour of ſtanding in the ſituation I now do, entertaining as I always muſt, an anxiety about every thing relating to this country, I had converſed upon this ſubject with a perſon, whoſe comprehenſive mind, and tranſcendent abilities, could foreſee and meet every difficulty, and although I had the misfortune of differing with him upon this ſubject, I had ſome conſolation in finding that he was driven to the neceſſity of admitting, that this conceſſion would end in a participation of eſtabliſhment, and that this participation would ultimately deſtroy the eſtabliſhment: a predicament indeed that gave him no concern, becauſe he was not anxious for any eſtabliſhment at all, which I believe to be the opinion of many who ſupport this queſtion. But I think it would have been juſtice in him, as it would be in them, to acknowledge and aſſert that opinion in the firſt inſtance, in order that we might know what were the principles of thoſe with whom we were diſputing.

It is improper to admit the Papiſts or Roman Catholics into either houſe of parliament, without diſpenſing with thoſe oaths which were eſtabliſhed at the revolution. Conſider, therefore, and let us examine for a moment how they ſtand, and how they are framed. It has been admitted by the beſt hiſtorians and the wiſeſt politicians of this age, that the great men who eſtabliſhed the conſtitution at the revolution, formed it upon clear and intelligible principles, unincumbered with any unneceſſary matter, and thereby made it intelligible to every one. There was nothing ſuperfluous: Although political conſiderations had their influence in the manner of conducting it, they eſtabliſhed only conſtitutional principles and maxims. A proteſtant church eſtabliſhment formed a leading and eſſential part of that conſtitution. Proteſtant predominancy, an expreſſion I have borrowed from a catholic authority, was a diſtinguiſhing character of the whole; and the wiſe men of that time thought it neceſſary to ſecure the permanency of their eſtabliſhment, by requiring oaths and declarations as teſts of attachment to it, from thoſe who formed the legiſlature, and were to fill the offices of high truſt in the ſtate. By theſe means all political power was put into the hands of proteſtants alone and avowedly ſo.—The reſtrictions, penalties and diſqualifications, that were afterwards impoſed upon papiſts, originated in the circumſtances of the times, and were founded in expediency; the papiſts were politically connected with the princes of the houſe of Stuart; in the courſe of time that family declined, and has now almoſt diſappeared; and the loyalty and attachment to his preſent Majeſty, manifeſted by the catholics on different occaſions, have produced and warranted a relaxation of all thoſe penal ſtatutes, which originated in the circumſtances of the times, and were founded, as I have ſaid, in expediency. But this relaxation by no means did, or could induce, or juſtify an alteration in the conſtitutional principles of the revolution, or weaken the permanency

manency of the fundamental ſtatutes eſtabliſhed for its ſecurity. Sir, the catholic and proteſtant, in regard to ſecurity for their perſons, characters, and properties, and in regard to civil rights in general, ſtand at preſent upon the ſame footing. I know it has been ſaid, that it is a ſophiſtical ſtatement to repreſent the catholic and proteſtant on the ſame footing, when an oath is required, which it is known a catholic cannot take in order to come into parliament, and I admit the truth of this objection: But you will recollect that it does not apply to civil rights, but to political power; and I avow, Sir, that I mean to exclude the catholic and every diſſenter, of whatever deſcription, from that power, who will not give that teſt of his attachment to the proteſtant eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate, which was preſcribed at the revolution, and under which, catholic and proteſtant have both derived ſuch great advantages.

The great and wiſe men who eſtabliſhed the conſtitution at the revolution, thought theſe oaths indiſpenſible guards and protections to a proteſtant eſtabliſhment, and after an experience of an hundred years, of the bleſſings derived from it, I am not prepared to give up its outworks.

It has been argued with dexterity, more than with effect, I hope, by the right hon. baronet near me, that we have nothing to fear from the Roman Catholics, that their attachment to the Pope is loſt, and that they will as readily ſupport the proteſtant eſtabliſhment as the proteſtants themſelves. Sir, in the firſt place, I will not pay the papiſts in general ſo bad a compliment as to ſuppoſe, that they have not as ſincere a preference for their church, as I have for that to which I have the honour to belong, and I can admit without imputation upon any diſſenter, that every one would, if he had it in his power, ſubſtitute a church congenial to his own perſuaſion in preference to one to which he could not conform.

But Sir, the right hon. Baronet has thought proper to repreſent the power of the pope as ridiculous, for the purpoſe of calming the alarms of the houſe about their own church; he has repreſented that potentate in a ſituation which I cannot hear without regret; not that I have more partiality to the tenets and doctrines of his Holineſs, than the right hon. Baronet, but becauſe I ſee from the means by which his power has been overthrown, that religion is itſelf in danger.—Beſides I am never diſpoſed to trample upon fallen greatneſs. The effects of the overthrow of the authority of the Pope, however in itſelf abſurd and unjuſtifiable, are certainly ſuch, as might have been a ſubject of ſerious alarm and conſideration to every thinking man. The overthrow of his power has not been the effect of enlightened reaſon, but has been produced by a ſpirit of atheiſm ſupported by political anarchy; and ſurely, Sir, when we contemplate the miſerable ſituation of France, where there has been a vain attempt of introducing the goddeſs of liberty in the place of chriſtianity; we cannot feel any ſtrong inducement to give up a church eſtabliſhment, for by this alone can we hope, after what has happened in France, that any religion can be preſerved in the country. So far from thinking the decline of the

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pope's authority, and the diſſolution of all attachment to the Roman Catholic perſuaſion, a reaſon for taking away any of thoſe props, which have ſupported our own eſtabliſhment, it becomes doubly neceſſary to fortify and protect it, in order to ſecure the exiſtence of ſome religion in the land. It is owing to the looſeneſs of morals and religious opinions, that we ſee men of ſuch different tenets and adverſe perſuaſions join upon this queſtion, they feel no difficulty to ſupport the catholic in making an inroad upon the conſtitution in church and ſtate; becauſe, if they can employ them ſucceſsfully in making the firſt breach, they know they can then commit catholic and proteſtant, and riſe upon the ruins of both.

The right hon. Baronet will conſider that this alarm ariſes from prejudice; but, Sir, I think I might venture to aſk him, though I could not preſume to caution a man of his experience and age, as I ventured to do an hon. member in the beginning of the Debate, whether he would recommend to the houſe to take any ſtep, or form a deciſion upon any aſſurance he could give, that the catholics would never attempt, when they had it in their power, in conſequence of their being admitted to a ſhare of the legiſlature, to demoliſh the proteſtant church, and ſubſtitute the Romiſh in its ſtead, or that thoſe who ſupport their claims do not look to a change in the conſtitution.

I have endeavoured to argue this queſtion as abſtractedly as the ſubject of it would admit; and I am confident, that if I have been ſucceſsful in proving that this bill is inconſiſtent with the exiſting conſtitution, I ſhall not be conſidered as any enemy to the catholic more than to the proteſtant. I maintain, that by ſupporting the conſtitution, I am a friend to both. I will ſay more: This bill, if carried, muſt neceſſarily weaken the connection between Great Britain and this country, and if it ſhould have that tendency, I am not only ſpeaking for both proteſtant and catholic, but for mankind; for whom is Europe to look to for its liberty at the preſent criſis, but to the protection and power of Great Britain?

An hon. gentleman whiſpers—a poor dependance!——Sir, I will venture to ſay, that it is a remarkable feature in the hiſtory of theſe times, that even in the convention where there is no reſpect of perſons, where kings, princes and miniſters are freely ſpoken of, and their intrigues developed without reſerve, there has never been the ſlighteſt inſinuation of corruption in the court of Great Britain; however great their animoſity may be, they look to Great Britain with awe, as every other country courts her for protection.

It has been urged by ſome gentlemen both in and out of the houſe, that the conceſſion of the right of voting neceſſarily induced the claim that is now made: If I had been in Ireland at the time, I confeſs that I might have pauſed upon that queſtion; but it by no means follows, that a right of ſitting in parliament, and holding great offices, ariſes out of the other. A right of voting might give

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an influence in this houſe, (and perhaps its exiſtence may be proved this night) which would tend to give a ſecurity to the catholics for the enjoyment and continuance of thoſe advantages they had lately acquired; that ſort of influence is felt in England, and reconciles the notion of not being repreſented.

Sir, it is no longer a queſtion of indulgence and expediency, we muſt now decide whether the principles of the conſtitution as eſtabliſhed at the revolution are to be ſupported or not. I rejoice as much as any man, at all the relaxations that have taken place in favour of the Roman Catholics; and I will prove to them the ſincerity of my profeſſions by ſupporting the conſtitution under which they derive ſo many advantages in common with the proteſtants, and I will endeavour to give ſtability to the whole, by ſhewing a firm and temperate determination to reſiſt all inroads upon it.

I will give ſecurity to the catholic as well as proteſtant property, by a cool and deliberate deciſion upon this point; and I will endeavour to reſcue the innocent and well intentioned from the artifices of thoſe ſecret enemies, who wiſh to engage them in undermining the conſtitution under a falſe pretence of acquiring perſonal emancipation, by an open, firm, and manly declaration, That even for them I will not ſacrifice the principles of the conſtitution.

Sir L. PARSONS ſaid, it was evident that the Catholic bill was in itſelf a meaſure of no concern to the Engliſh cabinet: for no one had contradicted the ſtatement, that had been made on the ſubject by Lord Fitzwilliam and his miniſters.—Beſides, though every one here underſtood immediately after his arrival that it was to have been the principal feature in his adminiſtration; yet upwards of two months elapſed, miniſters in England knowing this, before they notified a diſſent from it: and then too it appeared by the Duke of Portland's letter, that the meaſure was only to be *deferred*, not the principle condemned. This proved that Engliſh miniſters only wiſhed to make this meaſure ſubſervient to their own machinations, and that they thought a majority in that houſe would be ſo baſe and corrupt as to join them in doing ſo.—In 1792 a majority decided againſt giving any further privileges to the Catholics.—In 1793 the ſame majority paſſed the Catholic bill—At the beginning of this ſeſſion every one believed, that a majority would have voted for this bill: every one believe that a majority will vote againſt it now; and ſhould the Engliſh miniſters in the next ſeſſion wiſh it ſhould paſs, who does not believe, that a majority will vote for it then? beſides if the Engliſh miniſtry ſhould be changed, an event perhaps not very remote, this bill would be immediately adopted. Is it then worth while in order to ſtave off this meaſure at the utmoſt for a year or two, to keep the people, at ſuch a critical time as this, in a ſtate of irritation and diſcontent? I ſay, there is no law expreſsly againſt Catholics ſitting in parliament: nor were they excluded by any act but one which paſſed in 1782, commonly called

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ed Yelverton's act. That required that Members ſhould take the oath of ſupremacy and ſubſcribe the declaration; and in theſe there were three things contrary to the tenets of the Catholics, viz. an abjuration of the ſpiritual ſupremacy of the Pope; of the invocation of the Virgin Mary, and of the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation. —As to the two laſt they were matters purely of religious concern, and to exclude a man from Parliament becauſe he choſe to pray to the Virgin Mary, or believed in tranſubſtantiation, was too abſurd to dwell on: but as to the papal ſupremacy, that was a matter of ſtate, and deſerved conſideration. Mr. Locke on Toleration maintains, that the only principle upon which any government can refuſe to tolerate any religion, is if any of the tenets of the religion be dangerous or injurious to the government. Now thoſe tenets of the Catholic church which were ſo eſteemed, the Catholics of Ireland have abjured. By the oath in the Catholic bill of 1793 they abjure the infallibility of the Pope; they abjure his abſolving power; and they abjure his temporal ſupremacy.—His ſpiritual ſupremacy only remains, and who is ſo ſilly as to have any apprehenſion from this now?—Formerly the power of the Popes was very formidable: they were the principal inſtigators here of the Catholics againſt the Proteſtants. Pope Urban the 8th applauded the zeal of the Iriſh Catholics in propagating their faith by warring againſt heretics in the horrid rebellion of 1641, and immediately after granted them a full and plenary indulgence and remiſſion of their ſins. He ſupplied the Catholics here with money: he ſent Renuncini as his nuncio here to encourage them to fight for the Catholic faith. But who fears the Pope now? or who thinks he would now inſtigate the Catholics to rebel? But the other day, ſo little is he now feared by our government, and ſo ſunk is he in his own country, a regiment was ſent from this kingdom to protect him. It is childiſh therefore to have any apprehenſion from his ſpiritual ſupremacy now, when his temporal ſupremacy, his infallibility, his abſolving power, in ſhort every thing that made him formidable is abjured, and his authority ſo withered and decayed here and every where. How abſurd then is it to compare the preſent time with the paſt, and ſay that the laws which were neceſſary formerly are neceſſary now? But even formerly, when Popes were in all their plenitude of power, Catholics were not excluded from parliament. The firſt time any oath of ſupremacy was enacted in this country was at the reformation in the reign of Henry the VIIIth, but members of parliament were not required to take it, and Catholics continued to ſit in parliament. It was repealed in the ſucceeding reign;—and it was afterwards re-enacted in the reign of Elizabeth.—Still however it was not required, that members of parliament ſhould take it, and Catholics ſtill ſat in parliament: and ſo they continued to do till 1641, when in conſequence of the rebellion, a reſolution paſſed, but not a law, requiring the oath of ſupremacy to be taken by the members; and this in conſequence of the interference of the Pope and the Jeſuits in that rebellion.

But Catholics were ſoon again admitted into parliament, by our anceſtors, and ſo they continued to be, until the revolution, that is for 150 years did Catholics ſit in parliament; and this too at a time when they believed in all the moſt dangerous tenets of their church —when the Popes in every reſpect were moſt formidable, and when the Catholics poſſeſſed a very conſiderable part of the landed property of the kingdom;—and when therefore there were ten times as many of them in parliament as there could poſſibly be now, if this bill were to paſs;—and yet during all that time there was no act of theirs in parliament from which any inconvenience to the ſtate was ſuffered. And though they were excluded from the houſe of commons for a ſhort time in 1641, yet it was for nothing they did in parliament, but for what they did out of it; and ſo little were our anceſtors apprehenſive of any danger from re-admitting them, that they re-admitted them ſoon after; and in the reign of Charles II. when they were excluded from the Engliſh parliament, they were not from the Iriſh. Thoſe therefore who aſſert that theſe kingdoms would be ſeparated, and the eſtabliſhed religion ſubverted if Catholics were admitted into parliament, have in the teeth of their aſſertion this poſitive fact, that *for a century and a half preceding* the revolution, Catholics did ſit in every parliament here, and yet during that time theſe kingdoms did continue united, and the eſtabliſhed religion unſubverted; nor was any act paſſed in all that time to the prejudice of either.—At the revolution Catholics were excluded; but how? Not by an Iriſh, but by an Engliſh act. An act which no one will preſume to ſay, has any authority in this kingdom. On this principle Chief Baron Yelverton's act was paſſed in 1782: his enjoins members to take the oath and make the declaration which preclude Catholics from parliament: the repeal of this act would admit them: and this ſhews the ignorance of thoſe who ſay, that the king would by aſſenting to the admiſſion of Catholics here, violate his coronation oath: for to repeal an act which he paſſed in 1782, that is in 22 years after he took his coronation oath, could not be a violation of that oath. He concluded by ſaying, that from his own knowledge, and from the information he received from numbers who knew the Catholics well, he was perſuaded, that their prieſts had almoſt totally loſt their influence over them: that they would not therefore be influenced by them, but by their landlords in the diſpoſal of their votes; that almoſt all the landlords of the kingdom were Proteſtant; and therefore that no apprehenſion ought to be entertained from admitting Catholics into parliament, as the number would be very ſmall that would be admitted did this bill paſs: that it would certainly paſs very ſoon, and that it was better it ſhould do ſo now, and ſo put an end at once to all diſſention and diſunion in the country. If the people were united, they might ſet their external foes at nought; and be henceforth a nation, which none without would dare to aſſail, and none within to trample upon.

Right Hon. Mr. CUFFE ſaid, he could only judge of Lord Fitzwilliam's intentions on this ſubject from general report; for though in very early life he had had the happineſs of being intimately known to that nobleman, whom he much reſpected and admired, yet he had never ſpoken to him upon that ſubject. The bill before the houſe was matter of the higheſt importance, and every man ſhould form his determination by the conviction of his own mind, regardleſs of any party motive; for himſelf, having no object in view but the good of his country, he would conſider only how that might be affected by the bill; and in conſidering this, two queſtions naturally preſented:—Firſt, what benefit had reſulted to the country from the indulgences already extended to the Roman Catholics; whether they had contributed to the peace and proſperity of the country, or had only been an incitement to new claims and turbulent importunity? And ſecondly, how far the houſe, by entering on a meaſure ſo very deſperate as the preſent bill, would injure the proteſtant eſtabliſhment? As to the firſt queſtion: the benefit that immediately ſucceeded the indulgences granted in Lord Weſtmorland's adminiſtration, was a cloſe confederacy formed between the heads of the Roman Catholic convention, and the diſaffected of Belfaſt, for the purpoſe of forcing a parliamentary reform; ſeditious publications, by which the country has been kept in a ſtate of partial inſurrection: And now thoſe people, who formerly came as humble ſupplicants to entreat for favour and indulgence, come like ſwaggering bullies to demand a reſtoration of rights! Sir, this conduct never can ſucceed; the houſe of commons never will ſubmit to be ſwaggered into compliance; and thoſe who attempt to impreſs you with fear, let their numbers be ever ſo great, will only excite your indignation. In what he ſaid, Mr. Cuffe did not mean to include all the Roman Catholics; many of the noblemen and gentlemen of that religion were perſons of great worth and honour; but it was of the ſeditious papiſts of the metropolis he ſpoke—men who had nothing leſs in view than the deſtruction of the conſtitution, and eſtabliſhing in its ſtead the tyranny and anarchy of France, and to ſeparate this kingdom from England. If this was true, and it was manifeſtly ſo, the ſecond was anſwered. With a conſtitution different from England we could not long remain connected—the proteſtant church muſt inſtantly periſh: To preſerve the connection of England, we muſt have the ſame conſtitution, the ſame king, the ſame religion. He did therefore adjure the honourable perſons that compoſed that aſſembly to reſpect the oaths that the wiſdom of their predeceſſors had placed as guards to the conſtitution;—the oaths taken by the king at his coronation—the oaths taken by every member on obtaining a ſeat in that houſe, and not raſhly break the bands which connect Ireland with the Britiſh Empire.

Colonel BLAQUIERE ſaid, that the bill produced was dangerous to the conſtitution. He ſtated, that it went in a direct line to overturn the realm both in church and ſtate. He expreſſed his

his ſurpriſe to find the Right Hon. mover perſiſted; that however, he owned he was preſent ſome time ago, when the Right Hon. member prefaced this bill, and at the ſame time he thought he ſounded the knell of the conſtitution of England in the houſe of commons of Ireland: he ſaid, that he was the more ſurpriſed, as he had often heard him ſpeak of the Britiſh conſtitution with the greateſt reverence, and, as he thought, with a degree of love:—He ſtated, that in his doing it, he muſt have been ſenſible of the danger there muſt be in giving cauſe at this time for jealouſies in the kingdom, and that it ſurely was a very dangerous meaſure.—He ſtated that the ſceptre being ſwayed by a catholic, was a meaſure to be guarded againſt by all proteſtants. He then entered into an hiſtorical detail to prove his aſſertions; he ſtated firſt, that in the reign of Charles II. the act of ſettlement paſſed; that the commons fearing the ſovereignty might devolve to the next in ſucceſſion, that a bill of excluſion was brought forward to prevent the ſucceſſion, and that it was carried by a majority of 79.—The king was incenſed at this proceeding, and uſed his utmoſt to prevent its paſſing in the upper houſe, it was notwithſtanding brought forward, and the bill was rejected by only two. He continued his hiſtorical argument, to ſhew his reaſons for oppoſing the bill. He then ſtated king James's acceſſion, and that almoſt immediately upon it, he ſummoned a catholic parliament, and repealed at once the act of ſettlement; and ſoon after, by his own authority, repealed all the penal ſtatutes; he ſaid it was unneceſſary to ſay more on that reign. He then dwelt ſtrongly on the reign of queen Anne; he ſaid ſhe was educated a proteſtant, and ſhe had taken the coronation oath; but that ſhe had not aſcended the throne two years, when ſhe violated that oath. He ſtated different occurrences in that reign, and, in particular, that the queen, during her whole reign, endeavoured to place the Pretender on the throne; and had it not been for that determined parliament, doubts might ariſe whether or no we ſhould have now our moſt gracious ſovereign on the throne.—He ſtated, that the ſmalleſt tincture of the catholic communion remaining could never be eradicated. He called upon the houſe to ſay, in caſe they paſſed the bill, what ſecurity could they have for their lives and properties?—He begged leave to ſay, that with regard to their lives, they were trifling in compariſon to the conſtitution; and with regard to their properties, that he was not averſe to declare, that he ſtood there as a perſon of none.—He ſaid that his children were his property; that he had educated them in the proteſtant religion, and that he could not help but to lament, that in a few years they would be obliged to ſeek for an aſylum in a foreign country.—He would not decide on the queſtion too precipitantly; that they were now in an awful ſtate: that the commons he hoped would imitate the parliament of queen Anne; that they at this moment had an opportunity of ſhewing themſelves bold and ſteady. He added, let the miniſters have reaſon to declare to his majeſty, that the commons of Ireland have placed the Britiſh conſtitution in the centre of their houſe; and the baſis of it is

now fixed in that dreadful chaſm which was made in it in the year 1793, there to remain rivetted and immoveable until time and place ſhall be no more!—He added, let the miniſters alſo declare, that they would not allow ſuch a bill to be preſented, ſo as to lay his majeſty under that diſagreeable ſituation, to refuſe a requeſt which his coronation oath would call upon him and oblige him to do:—and further, he begged the attention of the houſe to hear one word more, and then he would end. He ſtated that to be with regard to the tender ſex: he ſaid, that in caſe the bill ſhould paſs, there could not be the leaſt doubt but that great calamity would enſue, and could not be far off, of meeting the widows in the ſtreets of this metropolis covered with weeds, and lamenting the loſs of their deareſt friend, and holding in their arms infants inſenſible of their danger. He then added, that if after all that has been ſaid, and will be ſaid, the bill ſhould paſs, he knew then that the proteſtants had no ſhield or refuge left but the union of both kingdoms, and added, that he himſelf would be the perſon, at the opening of the next ſeſſion, that would bring forward that motion.

Mr. TIGHE, jun. in a ſpeech of much argument and eloquence, ſupported the bill.

At about one o'clock Mr. CURRAN moved to adjourn the debate, upon the grounds of the exhauſted ſtate of the Houſe, and the practice of the Engliſh parliament; in which he was ſupported by Counſellor Egan.

Sir J. BLAQUIERE reſiſted it—that the Houſe was in full poſſeſſion of the merits of the queſtion, and would be better able to decide at this time when their minds were fully impreſſed with the magnitude and importance of this tremendous meaſure, than at any future day:—It was true, he admitted there was one inſtance on the Engliſh journals of ſuch a proceeding, when the Houſe overwhelmed by the eloquence of a gentleman in oppoſition (Mr. Sheridan) adjourned the debate;—but no ſuch circumſtance has appeared in this debate—and as that proceeding in the Engliſh Houſe has been productive of much inconvenience, he hoped the Houſe would avail themſelves of this example, and avoid falling into the ſame error.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM ſaid, that ſome gentlemen who had ſpoke in this debate, inſinuated that Roman Catholics compoſed the glorious volunteer army which on a former occaſion ſaved this country, whereas it is a well known fact that there were few, very few Roman Catholics in that body of men. I allow, ſaid he, that latterly there were a body of men who ſtiled themſelves the *national* volunteers, or guards, compoſed almoſt entirely of Roman Catholics; theſe men wore green jackets, green helmets and green cockades; they had the Iriſh harp as their arms; but not the crown.——Two learned gentlemen have ranſacked the page of

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history to prove when and how the Roman Catholics were deprived of ſeats in Parliament; for his part he was free to own, that it was a matter of indifference to him, for he would not now give them ſeats. Look at the petitions on your table; they, without any variation, demand a repeal of ALL the reſtrictive laws under which, they ſay, they labour. This bill fully complies with the prayer of thoſe petitions, except that it does not admit a *Papiſt* to inherit the throne of this kingdom. Their committees, their prieſts, their Francis-ſtreet orators, all join in the moſt unqualified abuſe of every Proteſtant that preſumes to differ from them. This is a juſt ſpecimen of Popiſh toleration.

Are Proteſtants to be debarred the freedom of debate? Are their words to undergo the ſcrutiny of Popiſh inquiſition? They have now ſhewn us what we are to expect if they obtain more power. In order to *ſanctify* this abuſe, a prieſt was choſen preſident at one of their late meetings, where the moſt violent reſolutions, ill-becoming the ſuppoſed miniſters of peace, were adopted. The holy preſident, and the reſt of the holy aſſociated prieſts, were particularly thanked for their *cordial co-operation* in the buſineſs of that day. Now, Sir, let us ſee what the buſineſs of that day was; it was a ſtring of reſolutions abuſing ſuch Proteſtants as differed from them, particularly the majority of the corporation of the metropolis; they call the Proteſtant cauſe a *proſtrate cauſe;* they ſay, that they view with ſcorn and indignation thoſe 41 members of that corporation who ſupported that cauſe; they call them the ſhameleſs advocates of unqualified oppreſſion and avowed monopoly. If, Sir, this bill ſhould paſs, then indeed the Proteſtant cauſe would be proſtrate; then, indeed, we ſhould feel their indignation by the loſs of property, and our civil and religious liberties. They ſpeak truth in that reſolution, when they ſay they view thoſe 41 men with ſcorn, for there never was a popiſh writer or a popiſh orator that did not treat all Proteſtants with ſcorn; their publications talk of uniting all religions, but every man of common ſenſe knows that it is the leading principle of the power and religion of Rome, which ſays, with all the thunders of the *Vatican*, that no faith is to be kept with heretics. By a paltry and daring attempt to ridicule, they ſtile the majority of the city corporation *Proteſtant aſcendancy* men. *Committing* ourſelves is become the faſhionable order of the day, therefore I commit myſelf to the *Proteſtant* principles of the *Proteſtant aſcendancy* men of the *Proteſtant* corporation of the city of Dublin. So cordially do I coincide with them in opinion that I ſhould thank any friend for promiſing me to have engraved on my tomb, "Here reſteth the body of a friend to the *Proteſtant aſcendancy.*" If we paſs this bill, there remains but one diſability, which is that no papiſt can wield the ſceptre of the crown of Ireland; but that remaining *trifle* would be repealed as a matter of courſe.

In my mind there is not a clauſe in the whole bill that does not militate againſt the Proteſtant intereſt and our connection with Great Britain. Can it be imagined, that if they had ſeats in this

houſe, they would not endeavour to repeal ALL acts of attainders and forfeitures. If a time of general trouble ſhould occur in this kingdom, they would tack thoſe bills of repeal to the money bills, and thereby unhinge government or gain the point. I am againſt the bill *in toto*—I am adverſe to its principles, for I am a friend to our preſent eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate. Some of theſe petitioners, in their late meetings, ſay that the awful moment is come, *nunc aut nunquam*. In that point I readily join iſſue with them, for that point is, whether we ſhall have a popiſh or a proteſtant parliament; there is no alternative—there muſt be either a popiſh or a proteſtant *aſcendancy*, for you might as ſoon expect to waſh the Æthiopian white, or make the leopard change his ſpots, as that the church of Rome would bear an equal power.

I moſt ardently hope that the memory of this day (the 5th of May, 1795) may be celebrated in the Proteſtant calendar, as we now celebrate the 12th of July, 1691—we have George the Third to ſupport the conſtitution of William the Third. To the principles of the immortal William the houſe of Hanover owes its diadem—to the principles of this bill the houſe of Hanover can never accede, without ſhaking the empire to its foundation. The Engliſh would never accede to a breach of the compact and act of ſettlement; I am therefore for the rejection of the bill.

Mr. W. SMITH. Sir, it has not been without conſiderable ſurpriſe, that I have this night heard the Bill of Rights made uſe of (if I may expreſs it) as a bill of proſcription: That I have heard a bill, whoſe avowed purpoſe was to aſſert the rights and liberties of the great body of the people, made uſe of as an authority to warrant us in excluding from all ſhare of political power three millions of men, three-fourths of our people. Sir, I ſupport the Catholic claims, on the ground of general juſtice, and temporary expedience. In fact, he who demonſtrates the juſtice of a meaſure, goes far towards proving the policy of that meaſure. The abſtract juſtice of ſatisfying the Catholic demand is deducible from the nature of political power in this country. I cannot heſitate to pronounce that in our revered conſtitution, its origin and end is the ſecurity of civil right. Aſk a theoriſt, who, having ſcrutinized the Britiſh ſcheme of government, finds the peerage endowed with moſt important powers to explain to you the juſtice of inveſting them with thoſe powers, he will reply, that the juſtneſs of their authority conſiſts in this, that it is neceſſary towards protecting the rights of the ariſtocracy. Turn this anſwer to a teſt of the propriety of Catholic claims. Do they act unreaſonably in requiring a ſecurity for thoſe civil rights, whoſe ſafe enjoyment is what, ſpeaking in the abſtract, and throwing out of our conſideration the proviſions of municipal law, makes treaſon an offence, and loyalty a duty?—There are countries, Sir, where if I ſhould pronounce that its tendency to ſecure mens civil rights from violation is the only juſtifiable ſource of power, my aſſertion might be refuted by the logic of a dungeon; but this poſition cannot offend the powers

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ſubſiſting here, ſince it but repeats a principle of that conſtitution from whence they flow. Are not Catholics poſſeſſed of rights? Doubtleſs: and of rights which our late liberality has much enlarged; but ſhall we not accompany the rights conceded with the means for their protection? Our recent gifts were of no value, if not intended to be permanent: of little, if expoſed to the conſtant peril of invaſion. The language of our conſtitution to its worſhippers is this; "as *rights*, I give you all that is truly valuable in ſocial life:—take *privilege* as a pledge for their perpetual enjoyment."—The man who holds his civil rights, unattended by protecting powers, holds the former inſecurely, and at the will of others. Our rights are our conſtitutional poſſeſſions; our privilege, the entrenchment with which we fence them in. Why ſhould this latter be denied to the Catholic ſubject?—On what principle?—On none of thoſe, aſſuredly, which ſupport the conſtitution. Abſtractedly ſpeaking, in the ſpirit of Britiſh freedom, political power is either no where juſt, or it is but juſtice to extend it to the Catholics; but the Catholics are a diſtinct ſect—a ſeparate branch of the community from us!—By ſo much the more entitled to claim a ſhare of power; for by ſo much the leſs likely are we to guard their rights; in whoſe ſecurity we take no immediate intereſt ourſelves. Recur again to the privileges which our nobility poſſeſs: it is, amongſt other reaſons, becauſe the body of our ariſtocracy is diſtinct, that its members are properly inveſted with peculiar powers. But enough of general topics; I come now to the temporary expedience of the meaſure.

I ſcorn an arbitrary populace, as much as any of my hearers; and, were I certain of the utility of any meaſure, ſhould ſupport that meaſure, at the riſk of inſurrection; when the intrinſic quality of a meaſure was but doubtful, I would ſuffer its unpalatableneſs to weigh againſt its adoption. It ſeems a becoming principle in every free government, that popular inclination ſhould turn a *wavering* balance. The will of the multitude is not law, but it may be evidence; it may not bind, but it ſhould influence. In rejecting the Catholic claims, ſhall we comply with the public wiſh? *Undoubtedly* not: for the Catholics *are* the public;—conſider this maturely; they are the great body of your people; it is no very extravagant hyperbole to call them *Ireland*. Conſider next, the preſent mighty criſis: the awful and unparalleled ſituation of the world. Is not the human character tremendouſly fermenting? and ſhall we not guard our country from the effects of its exploſion? Shall we rather throw in a further leaven of diſcontent, and by ſouring the Catholic mind, encreaſe the efferveſcence? Is this a time which calls for mere negative allegiance? an indolent acquieſcence in the preſent ſcheme of things, which refrains alike from loyalty and treaſon? Or does not the period demand rather a zeal for the conſtitution, which none, who are aliens to its benefits, can feel?—It is at all times the bold ſpirit of our manly conſtitution that the ſubject's perſon ſhall be reſpectable, as well as free. Hence the energy of Britons. No man can be zealous for a cauſe which

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ſlights and puts him down; and if government would enrol Catholic enthuſiaſm on their ſide, it is not by Catholic degradation they will excite it; but government *have* need of the enthuſiaſm of their people; for the licentious hand of anarchy is raiſed againſt all government. Jacobiniſm is abroad: the lower claſſes of ſociety form his prey: in Ireland theſe are Catholics. Shall we ſhut the gates of our Conſtitution, and expoſe them to this monſter? Shall we eſtrange them by that contumely which a Roman Satiriſt deſcribes as the moſt intolerable evil attendant on low eſtate? Let us not be too penurious in conceſſion. *Half*-Citizen, and *whole* Jacobin might become ſynonymous in theſe days. The policy of France is to eſtrange the nation from its rulers: Shall not the counter-policy of Ireland be to unite them? To little purpoſe is miniſterial coalition; unleſs you make the parties of your people coaleſce. Events now paſs upon a greater ſcale. The days of puny and minute cabal are at an end.

Proteſtantiſm is the eſtabliſhed religion of the ſtate; but I will go a ſtep higher, and ſay, that chriſtianity is (more remotely) our eſtabliſhment. In the paramount bonds of this ſublime religion, whoſe very name ſuggeſts good will to all men, we are at once connected with our Catholic fellow-ſubjects. Let us remember this grand union, and forget ſubordinate diſtinctions. As ſtateſmen, as well as believers, we ſhould be Chriſtians;—for infidelity and Jacobiniſm march hand in hand. The ſame man who wrote the "*Age of Reaſon*," was alſo the author of the "*Rights of Man*." —Chriſtianity is attacked in Europe. Should not all its deſcriptions be embodied for its ſupport? and the worſhip, throughout all its branches, be made reſpectable? The breaſt, from which this orderly religion is once baniſhed, has loſt the firmeſt ſtay, which ſupported its allegiance. Remembering this, we muſt, aſſuredly, be cautious how we impoſe diſabilities on the Catholic. Diſguſted with the incapacities which cling around their tenets, the unenlightened might raſhly wreak their vengeance on religion, and ſeek refuge in infidelity, and its Jacobin train of notions. Such is the uſual progreſs of popular dereliction.—They ruſh, inconſiderately, from one extremity to another; from ſuperſtition to infidelity; from ſervility to licence. The hiſtory of French confuſion atteſts the truth of what I ſay. Nor would the Catholic apoſtate reaſon wildly, though profanely: for, when once he had become an infidel, he might ſeem to be a Proteſtant; and could thus get over all his incapacities at once. Conſider this; his diſabilities ariſe, I admit, from his being Catholic: but do they not ſpring, more remotely, from his being Chriſtian?—It is not Popery, but Chriſtianity, that ſtands between him and falſe ſwearing. We ſhould be cautious how we even *ſeem* to impoſe penalties on religion—a tax upon the Chriſtian is a bounty to the Infidel.

But the Catholics are ſo numerous—their religion may predominate, and our eſtabliſhment be overturned. Perhaps here does exiſt ſome riſk; and having preferred it to a greater, we ought to guard againſt it. I ſhall always concur in defence of the church of Ireland;

land; I ſhall always concur in defence of *Proteſtant Aſcendancy*:—an expreſſion which, I know not why, has been latterly laid aſide, but which conveys what, I think, *our* religion ſhould enjoy. I would give aſcendancy to the church, but not to the individual; except ſo far as the latter be neceſſary to ſecure the former; and in meaſuring the degree, I feel there is ſome nicety. But the number of the Catholics ſeems an ill reaſon for their ſubjection, in a country whoſe conſtitution ſays the many ſhall be free! It is an unlucky circumſtance that our eſtabliſhment lying one way, our population lies another; but we muſt take things as they are; and I hold that an eſtabliſhment unuſually contracted, demands a toleration uncommonly extenſive; one which will not ſtop at the removal of penalties, but will alſo venture on conferring powers.

Perſuaded, as I am, of the ſuperior excellence of our religion, I muſt believe that its extent will be proportioned to our civilization; that Proteſtantiſm will find converts, and flouriſh amongſt our commonalty, in proportion as that commonalty ſhall become enlightened: I therefore hold an attempt to keep our populace in a ſtate of barbariſm and degradation, as calculated to impede the progreſs of the Proteſtant religion.

But, if there be danger of Catholic pre-eminence on the one hand, is there no fear of Jacobin principles on the other? And if their poiſon had already tainted the Catholic body, ſhould we beſt prevent its farther progreſs by proſcription?—But why turn all our caution to the quarter which leaſt wants it? Let us chuſe our alternative. If *Pius* be the conqueror, who is to overſet our Conſtitution—(the mighty *Pius!* the late protegée of a regiment of dragoons!)—we ſhould haſten to negotiate with the Jacobins of France;—but, if this latter be the quarter from whence danger is apprehended, we ſhould embrace our Catholic fellow-ſubjects without delay. Shall we render penalties eternal, which even as temporary were oppreſſive, and continue fetters on religion which were originally meant for politics? for certain ſtate opinions of which Popery was made the teſt?—Opinions, let me add, whoſe miſchief was but fugitive, and has long ſince paſſed away. Would you know what are Catholic principles at this day?—Examine the brigade, you will there behold our countrymen in the character of ſtaunch Royaliſts, ſteadily reſiſting all Republican ſeduction, and loyal to the Bourbons as they had been to the Stuarts;—loyal as they had been to that infatuated James, who vainly eſpouſed the cauſe of a ſmall minority of his ſubjects againſt the rights and wiſhes of the great body of his people.—Let us not purſue an example which we abhor; it is as wrong to be a bigot for the Proteſtant as for the Papiſt.

What pledge have we for the loyalty of the Catholic eccleſiaſtic? for his ſteady averſion to the Jacobin chaos of principles?—We have the cruelties exerciſed on his order by the French; we have his conſciouſneſs that Jacobiniſm muſt be the ruin of the Prieſthood. What ſecurity have we for the loyalty of the Catholic gentlemen?—We have his ſtake of property in the country; we have his ſtake of rank in ſociety—that rank which makes him the natural champion

of

of ſubordination. We have, aſſuredly, as good ſecurity in the caſe of the gentleman as of the peaſant; and ſhould be cautious how, transferring degradation from the latter, we impoſe it, as a leſs tolerable ſtigma, upon rank. This, if there were diſaffection, would be to give it leaders. I, for my part, ſhould rather ſee the ancient gentleman, the heir of catholic wealth, and perhaps of catholic dignity, ſeated as a popular repreſentative amongſt us; one whoſe rank and property ſtood as pledges for his conduct, than behold ſome proteſtant tool of catholic electors:—the ready inſtrument of their worſt party-views: the needy repreſentative of indigent conſtituents.

Suppoſe danger from the Catholics;—yet, where ſome riſk muſt be run, we ought to chuſe the leaſt.—I would fain preſerve our Church eſtabliſhment unimpaired, ſuperſtitiouſly inviolate in its moſt remote *pomœria*; but ſhould rather abate ſomewhat of Proteſtant pre-eminence, than not enſure the fabrick of both Church and Conſtitution. Superficial yielding may be fundamental conſervation:

"*imaque tellus*
Stet, quia ſumma fugit."

But, from all I can collect, the dangers are imaginary; and ſuch the ſtate of intereſts and property in this country, that the Catholics will not enter at once on the practical enjoyment of that privilege, which they call on us in theory to beſtow. They will creep gradually and ſafely into conſequence amongſt us, acquiring at every ſtep an habitual love for the Conſtitution, and even at laſt, not tranſgreſſing the bounds of Proteſtant ſecurity.

In the purſuit of my profeſſion, I lately ſaw a Grand Jury, conſiſting entirely of Proteſtants. This fact either goes to demonſtrate the truth of my laſt aſſertion, by ſhewing that there could not be found a ſingle Catholic in the whole county, of property entitling him to be called preferably to Proteſtants on the Grand Jury; or it proves that the incapacities under which Catholics ſtill labour, may be made a handle for withholding the favours already granted, and on this ground I might argue ſtrongly for their further emancipation.

But this ſubject will be ſo much better treated by others than by me, that I ſhall not engroſs longer the attention due to them. I ſhall not dwell upon the topic of ſo much having been granted, that it is become impolitic on this ground, to refuſe extending our conceſſions; a topic urged with ſufficient ſtrength, Mr. Speaker, by the ableſt of Catholic opponents in 1793. I ſhall not dwell on the many friends which the Catholic claims have latterly obtained amongſt the Proteſtants. I ſhall conclude when I have noticed a hint which caught my ear, that attachment to the Catholics means eſtrangement from Great Britain. I diſclaim harbouring any ſuch ſentiment as the latter. I wiſh the two countries to continue ever one cordial intimately well connected Empire. I wiſh their harmony from prejudice, as well as principle. From prejudice the growth of my partialities towards England—a conſiderable portion

of

of my life was ſpent there, and the thought of England connects itſelf with all that is pleaſing to my mind. It was the place of my education—the ſcene of theſe early years, and of thoſe early habits, which the memory recalls and cheriſhes with moſt delight. I am proud to think it contains many friends, who much regard me; and perſons whoſe eſteem affords a reaſonable ground for pride. I am, beſides, perſuaded, that in their harmony conſiſts the welfare of both iſlands.—If any man wiſhed a breach and endeavoured to foment it, he ſhould find in me, if not a formidable, at leaſt a ſtrenuous opponent. Did the Catholics deſire a rupture, I ſhould vote againſt their emancipation.

Mr. OGLE ſaid his ſentiments on the ſubject of this bill were already well known—he had oppoſed it in the firſt inſtance, and would oppoſe it in every ſtage where he ſhould meet it. He would not have ſo often troubled the Houſe, but that he had a ſolemn duty to diſcharge—to rally round the Conſtitution, and to reſtore to his conſtituents their deareſt rights, which they had committed into his hand;—as yet he had never deſerted the Proteſtant body, nor, however gloomy the proſpect, had he ever loſt his road.—To the bill he would oppoſe the Revolution—the Coronation oath—the oath of Abjuration—the eſtabliſhment of Church and State—the act of Union and of Settlement—the right of the Houſe of Hanover—the acts of this ſeſſion—and the forfeited lands;—he therefore hoped the bill would never go into a committee.

Rt. Hon. D. LATOUCHE was againſt the bill, becauſe it proſtrated at the feet of the catholics all the great offices of ſtate; it releaſes them from obligations which the proteſtants are bound by, and therefore it was partial. In his opinion it endangered the Hanoverian ſucceſſion, becauſe for any thing that appeared in the bill it did not prevent the crown from gracing the brow of a Roman Catholic king, which he prayed heaven to avert. He would on theſe grounds oppoſe every clauſe of it.

Honourable GEORGE KNOX. Sir, It is apparent to every man, that at no period, ſince the ſettlement of this country, has there exiſted a neceſſity ſo prompt and abſolute to ſecure the affections and unite the exertions of the whole people, as the preſent. We are engaged in a war, not of ſieges and of battles merely, not a conteſt of revenue and reſources; if it were, the grants of our Parliaments, and the gallantry of our armies, would remove from us all apprehenſions; but we are engaged in a conflict with an enemy whoſe weapon is ſeduction, whoſe ſucceſſes are ſedition, and whoſe victories are inſurrection; we are contending with principles the moſt faſcinating, and the moſt pernicious—the moſt exalted in appearance, the moſt ſelfiſh in reality; principles which affect to reſtore us to our beſt rights, by ſubjecting us to our worſt paſſions—to purify our morals, by baniſhing our religion—and to ſupport the conſtitution, by violating every maxim on which it is founded, and ſubverting every eſtabliſhment by which it is upheld.

Such,

Such, Sir, is our warfare; and I will not ſcruple to aſſert, that on our vote this night depends whether we ſhall eſtabliſh in this country thoſe principles which muſt be our deſtruction, or whether we reſcue our fellow ſubjects from that gulph into which they are faſt ſinking, and into which, if they do fall, we muſt inevitably be dragged.—I ſay, Sir, that if we refuſe this bill, we ſhall do, unintentionally indeed, but really and effectually, the moſt ſignal ſervice to our enemies. For obſerve how exactly our conduct will correſpond with their views: they aim at the extinction of all *conſtitutional* principles and privileges, and laugh at all rights which time and precedent have authorized and eſtabliſhed—we violate them; what follows? the people will forget or neglect them; and if they do, if they once ceaſe to ſtruggle for known, determined, exiſting conſtitutional principles, depend upon it they will ſoon ſpeculate on the eſtabliſhment of new ones; depend upon it they will not be long before they reſort to what is called FIRST principles; they will not be long before they throw off the painful, though ſalutary, reſtraint of laws; they will not long covet thoſe Britiſh privileges which we ſhall have taught them to deſpair of and deſpiſe.—No: they will ſoon adopt, with the zeal of novices, but with the ſkill of the experienced, the whole ſyſtem of organized anarchy, philoſophic barbarity, and patriotic rapine, of which an example is before them, and for the accompliſhment of which, no doubt, a fraternal aſſiſtance could ſpeedily be ſolicited and obtained.—And to this point they are not led by ſlow degrees: Such has been the unfortunate fluctuation of our councils, that they will now be driven to it by what they deem, however it may be meant, an inſulting attack upon the moſt energetic, implacable, and glowing paſſion of the human breaſt—their pride.

On the ground of preſent expediency, therefore, it is evident that this bill cannot be reſiſted.—It is happy for the country that it is equally irreſiſtible on the ground of right and permanent advantage.

This truth cannot be diſputed:—that no government, except a military and deſpotic one, can long exiſt unleſs it is ſupported by the opinion of the governed; it may endure for a ſeaſon of tranquillity, but muſt periſh in the firſt ſtorm. In barbarous times, that opinion, and the ſtrength it gives, has generally been found either in the ſuperſtition of the people, which places their underſtandings under the controul of their ſpiritual teachers—or in their attachment to certain chiefs who have been uſed to lead them into the field, and from whoſe ſkill and proweſs they derive honour and ſecurity; but when an opener intercourſe has enlarged the underſtandings of men, and when commerce has diffuſed her treaſures and her knowledge, where is that government to look for permanence and protection which does not depend upon its military ſtrength? Not, as formerly, to the clergy—their influence has followed the ignorance which nouriſhed and maintained it; not to the barons—their damp and cobwebbed halls are no longer crouded with vaſſals at once valiant and ſubmiſſive; you muſt ſearch for

them in the capital—there they are to be found, impoverished by the luxuries, and enervated by the vices of commerce, whilst their late followers are earning and enjoying her gains and her independence.—Where, then, must the Throne take refuge, since ignorance and superstition, barbarism and chivalry, present it no asylum? *In the arms of reason, and under the mantle of wealth.* Wealth is, then, the aristocracy which upholds the monarch, and reason is the religion which sanctifies his authority. These, sir, are the general principles and history of all free governments; they are more peculiarly the principles and ancient practice of the British constitution.—That wise constitution has always rested on the maxim (which is, in truth, its main pillar) of admitting into legal powers and privileges whoever had strength to injure or support it: The clergy and the barons were courted by the crown as long as they swayed the public opinion; when property and knowledge, and consequently independence of sentiment, became more diffused, the commons were resorted to, and admitted into the state; and when, at length, commerce had so spread out the wealth of the nation that the feudal aristocracy was completely annihilated, a principle, the broadest illustration of the doctrine was broached and acknowledged, that taxation and representation could not be separated, that is, that in the British constitution power could never be disunited from wealth. Now, sir, I do not mean here to say that taxation and representation are separated, though the representative part of the community is so much abridged, but that the principle which gave that maxim birth begins again to be forgot. In the case of America, it is true, that principle was resisted, and what was the issue? At the Reformation, and not before, that general principle was departed from; and in the instance of the Catholics of England, it continues to be violated; but the cause of that violation, and its continuance, are both obvious, and to this country they are inapplicable. The Catholics were then a strong, united, enthusiastic state party, hostile to liberty, assisted from abroad, and openly or secretly favoured by the prince.—To keep the Reformation alive, then, in the struggles of infancy, it was necessary to exclude them from power: for the king and a Catholic clergy and cabinet united, might have overthrown both church and state. What is the case now? The Catholics weak, reduced, and disunited—(I speak of England),—and the prince and chief persons of the empire adverse to their religion; why then, do the restrictions still continue upon them in that country? The truth is, they are made a sacrifice to the prejudices of the people: their numbers are so small, that the danger and the evil are of no extent; the persecution and hatred of Popery is supposed to give strength to the Protestant Church; the parliament and the minister are not urged to meddle with the subject, and are afraid to touch it, and therefore it remains an exception to that rule. But if such an exception can be tolerated in Great Britain, is that a reason why it should exist and be favoured here? Does not the state of this country, on the contrary, peculiarly reject it? Here the great bo-

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dy of the people is Catholic; much of the real, and no ſmall ſhare of the perſonal property of the country, in Catholic hands; the lower claſs ignorant and turbulent, fit inſtruments, therefore, in the hands of irritated and unſubdued ambition; in a few years, if trade increaſe, the Catholics muſt poſſeſs almoſt a monopoly of the perſonal wealth of the kingdom,—a controul, therefore, over the numerous claſs of manufacturers and mechanics—a deſcription of people the moſt prone to turbulence, ſince their income is fluctuating and precarious, and their wants and vices always craving and unſatisfied. Now if we drive the rich Catholic from the legiſlature, and from our own ſociety, we force him to attach himſelf to the needy and diſaffected; we oblige him, if pride and ambition have their uſual operation, to breed and nouriſh diſcontent, and keep alive a religious quarrel in the country. But if on the contrary, we admit him at once into this and the other houſe, and into the offices of ſtate, he becomes member of our parties, and the Catholic party is forgot. But, then, the Proteſtant intereſt ——I know not, ſir, what ſome Proteſtants may find or fancy to be their intereſt, but of this I am ſure, that it never can be the intereſt of the Proteſtants of Ireland to have a numerous, powerful, united, and adverſe party in the country, but that it muſt be their intereſt, by accepting the ſervices of the Catholic, to annihilate his power, and to live in peace and harmony with their fellow ſubjects.

Are we afraid of Republicans? Now let me aſk why, in ſo numerous an aſſembly as this is, compoſed of men with ſuch a variety of talents, temper, and objects, in a time of ſuch wanton ſpeculation as the preſent, ſcarce one republican is to be found. But ſuppoſe half of thoſe members who have been returned to this parliament, ſhould by law be incapacitated from ſitting here; or to bring it more home—ſuppoſe all the preſent Northern, or all the preſent Southern members excluded by act of parliament, how long do you think, Sir, that they or their deſcendants would brook the degradation? I do ſuſpect highly as I think of thoſe perſons, that they who are now the moſt loyal of his majeſty's ſubjects would ſoon rank among the worſt affected to the conſtitution, the empire of the throne: for ſo man is made. But ſuppoſe the Catholics, already tainted with republicaniſm, will privileges render them more dangerous? Will privileges add an unit to their numbers, or a guinea to their wealth? Will they become more ſpeculative, more virulent, more united by the conſtitutional conteſts in which they will be engaged? Does any man fear that the conſtitution of Ireland will ever be voted away by its parliament, whatever be its religion? If a French miſſionary were ſent to Ireland to ſpread the French doctrines, what would be his wiſhes? What could be his courſe? Would he, bent as he muſt be on aſſailing the principles which ſupport this houſe, attempt to tamper with thoſe whoſe political ruin was the prime object of his miſſion? No, as his wiſh muſt be to kindle a war between the privileged and unprivileged orders, he would exult to find ſo much of the property, and ſo much

much of the talents of the nation forced to confederate with the mob. That to the uncultivated and indigent, his natural allies in every ſtate, were added here, the wealthy and well informed, his natural foes. Through the extravaſated ambition of the latter, he would agitate and inflame the former, and diffuſe his feveriſh ſpirit through the whole political maſs. Thus we are reluctant to remove what the Jacobine wiſhes we ſhould continue. It is in this houſe, doubtleſs, it is in our ſociety that France muſt ever be deteſted, and Paine deſpiſed.

But the meaſure which is now propoſed, we have already obliged ourſelves to receive, and ſuch was the opinion and language of the ableſt adverſaries of Lord Hobart's bill.

The policy of our anceſtors ſince the revolution was a wiſe one, if tyranny can ever be wiſdom, for it was adapted to its end, and they underſtood and practiſed the true maxims of bad government. They knew the effects of wealth and knowledge. They counted the number of the Catholics, and calculated their phyſical force, and they reaſoned juſtly, and acted conſiſtently when they deprived them of property and education. They plainly ſaw that on the loathſome ſlime of ignorance and wretchedneſs, could the ponderous and ill-cemented bark of their ſupremacy only float. The conduct and principles which they purſued at that time, we have ſince ſeen followed by the late oppreſſor of France. Robeſpierre too was the enemy of learning and of wealth. So true it is, that in all ages, and in all meridians, the cauſe of tyranny is the ſame.

What our anceſtors did, however, we have undone. The legiſlature thought, and ſo far it thought juſtly, that we could be a powerful, proſperous, and happy people, if three fourths of us were ignorant and beggars. You, therefore, opened the gates of knowledge and of opulence, but you did not obſerve that on their ſympathetic hinges were turning the gates of power and the conſtitution. Thoſe gates once opened, no common force can cloſe—to imagine it is folly—it is wickedneſs to attempt it. Take then your choice, re-enact your penal laws, riſque a rebellion, a ſeparation, or a union,—or paſs this bill;—for the hour is nearly arrived when we *muſt* decide;—the hour is already come when we *ought* to decide;—— when our deciſion can ſtill be free, collected and compoſed;—when, Sir, are falſe pride, falſe ſhame, and mock conſiſtency to recede? Is it now when the danger muſt be ſo trivial, while the numbers we admit are too minute and inconſiderable even to form a party in the houſe, or muſt we wait till wealth has added to their numbers, and irritation to their union; till they ſhall feel their power, and exerciſe it in revenge. This is a ſerious reflection. How many, let me aſk, are there who now oppoſe this meaſure, who do not lament that it was not carried when I firſt propoſed it? Who is there when it does paſs, as paſs it ſurely muſt, that will not rue this day, if this day is to be darkened and diſgraced by its rejection.

In every political queſtion, I muſt acknowledge there are difficulties, and to moſt political meaſures there are weighty objecti-

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ons; in our deciſions, therefore, we muſt fairly weigh the advantages againſt the diſadvantages, and reſt upon the preponderating ſcale. To the meaſure before us there are ſome objections not to be overlooked. But when I ſee that the dangers which follow its rejection are inevitable and tremendous, being rooted in the very nature of man and of ſociety, and that thoſe to which its reception expoſes us, are doubtful, diſtant, and avertable, I cannot bring my mind to heſitate for a moment. The minor objections to this bill have already been fully anſwered. I ſhall, therefore, confine my obſervations to that which is moſt plauſible, I mean the danger to the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment. Next to chriſtianity itſelf, I revere the proteſtant eſtabliſhment, for it preſerves religion without deifying the prieſthood, allows liberty of conſcience without ſanctioning licentiouſneſs, retains what is modeſt and venerable, and rejects what is gaudy and fraudulent in the worſhip from which it ſeparated, and approaches in its tenets, as near as any other religion, and nearer than moſt others to the real doctrines and true ſpirit of the Goſpel. As connected with the ſtate, it protects the crown without debaſing itſelf; it humbles the pride of the nobility without arrogance or aſſumption; it ſhames the licentiouſneſs of the wealthy without cant and hypocriſy; and it leads the people to their duty without exciting their paſſions, or impoſing on their credulity. Applied to this country too it is a bond of Imperial connexion, and therefore worthy of the care and veneration of every man who values that connexion. About this eſtabliſhment, therefore, I cannot be indifferent, for I underſtand the advantages which ariſe from it: A knowledge for the want of which many of the enemies of this bill muſt atone by the virulence of their zeal.

Now, Sir, one of thoſe conſiderations by which I have been impelled to the ſupport of this meaſure, has been the real peril in which our eſtabliſhment ſtands, if we perſiſt in rejecting it; for if we do ſo perſevere, I clearly ſee that we ſhall be driven to this dilemma, either to give up our national independence, or our national worſhip; but that by paſſing it now we take the moſt efficacious means to ſecure both. If, I ſay, we continue to exclude and irritate the Catholic, we can have no real ſecurity againſt the ſubverſion of property and religion, but an unconditional ſubmiſſion to Great Britain, and a reſignation of the crown of Ireland into the hands of the Britiſh parliament. But if we adopt it now, we ſhall gradually liberalize the Catholic gentry; they will ſee how much their property, their liberty, and their lives depend upon the conſtitution; they will obſerve how much that conſtitution depends on our connexion with Great Britain, and how much that connexion reſts on the uniformity of the ſtate religion. He cannot fail to ſee, for it will be a leſſon of experience, that whatever leads to forcible *ſeparation* muſt end in *ſubjection*: but that if the connection between the two countries ſhould be diſſolved by mutual conſent, we ſhould incur all the expence, without acquiring any of the profits of independence; and that when our conſtitution ſhould loſe the check of Britiſh influence, and our parties the arbitration of the Britiſh cabinet, we ſhould ſoon be conſumed by the waſting diſeaſe of a jea-

lous and rapacious oligarchy, or expire in the convulsions of a democracy. Do you think, Sir, that the Catholic gentleman, educated and living amongst us, is likely to be so silly a bigot as to sacrifice the constitution of his country to the chance of aggrandizing a few ignorant priests? Is this an age in which such a whimsy is likely to prevail? Is it not much more probable, taking into view the progress of knowledge, and the independent spirit of the times, that the Catholic gentlemen, already more than half Protestants, will bring up their children to a conformity with that faith which opens to them, without a convulsion, the profits of the church? Speak to the Catholic barrister, ask the Catholic officer his opinion, you will learn what will be the sentiment of a Catholic member of parliament. No, Sir, such a project is not, cannot be within their contemplation, or their means; but then they will force a democratic change in the representation, vulgarly, and perhaps falsely called a reform; still such a violence must come from without, from those who do not possess the privilege, not from those who do. On the contrary, I ask not the experience of this night to prove with what unwillingness men who possess a privilege admit their fellow subjects to a participation of it; I confess, therefore, I feel no alarm on the subject. If the Catholics quarrel with Great Britain, it will be, not for *their* faith, but *her* constitution.—Deprive them of the latter cause and we need not fear the former. If I tremble for the establishment, it is not the Catholic and his cross, but the Deist and his blasphemy that I fear. If the Protestant temple is to fall, it is from Protestant levity, and from Protestant profligacy; it is from those who scoff at all religion, traffic with the church, and pollute the public ear with their profaneness, that I look for the overthrow of the fabric. The lofty example is observed, and is descending; when it shall become general, when the trite jest of the ostentatious blasphemy shall issue from vulgar mouths, ministers of religion you may retire, for your mission is fulfilled. If the Protestant establishment is in danger from the Catholic, it will be from the Catholic forcing into the constitution, and carrying the church along with him. Admit him, and the church remains behind. We shall admit him; I foresee, I foretel we shall; but we shall withhold that admission so long, that at length we shall give, without generosity, what will be received without gratitude; we shall yield, not to reason, but to clamour: what ought to be the result of wisdom and reflection, will be the work of panic and precipitation; and that day which shall record the last triumph of the constitution, will to us be a day of humiliation and disgrace.

I have now, Sir, laid all the strongest objections before the house, and given them, I trust, the weight they merit. Now, Sir, suppose a man to have erected a building, but not to have secured the foundation, and to have heaped pile upon pile, till the tottering edifice was ready to tumble on his head, and he and his habitation to be destroyed by the first storm, what would be his conduct? If a prudent man, he would, no doubt, be in haste to examine into and enlarge his foundation. Yet many plausible objections might be

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urged why he ſhould not. The ſcaffolding may fall; in removing one ſtone a whole maſs may break off;—"Better to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know no of;" beſides, who can tell but it may laſt your own time; and as to your poſterity, let your children take care of themſelves. Our poſterity!—yes, daſtards as we are, theſe are the counſels which we hear, which we admit, which we bluſh to own, but which we are not aſhamed to follow. The building, we hope, will laſt the ſhort period of our exiſtence, and we care not if it, and our poſterity, be levelled in the duſt. *After us the deluge*, was the ſelfiſh proverb ever in the mouth of the French nobility; but the deluge has ruſhed upon them in their own time, and ſwept them from the face of the earth.

Confident, Sir, however, as I am of the juſtice and abſolute neceſſity of this meaſure; I am not ſurpriſed that it ſhould be oppoſed. I can eaſily calculate the effects of habit, pride, and ſhame, irreſiſtible in weak minds, powerful in the ſtrongeſt, operating againſt this bill;—I can conceive much irritation againſt the perſon who brings it forward, and ſome intereſt in the defeat of a few of thoſe who ſupport it, raiſing up a hoſt of angry or rapacious enemies; I can conceive too an honourable attachment in the beſt minds to a declining cauſe; but I cannot conceive that this can laſt, that the eyes of every man muſt not at length open to the perils which ſurround him, and that a meaſure of policy and right, of national honour and national ſecurity, ſhall not in the end prevail.

Such, Sir, are my ſentiments; ſuch the principles which have compelled me to come forward on this great ſubject. Whether I have transfuſed my conviction into the minds of others; whether this houſe will ſympathize with my feelings, or be governed by my reaſonings; I cannot tell; but this I will ſay, that no honeſt man could think as I do without acting as I have done. If I am miſtaken now I can never hope to eſcape error;—to the verdict of futurity, therefore, I muſt ſubmit it. I ſubmit to it, and without fear, for what can I apprehend from her ſentence? Can I ſuppoſe that Chriſtianity will relapſe into intolerance,—that the human mind will become retrograde,—and that the religion of peace and ſociability ſhall become the inſtrument of ſtrife—of the pretext of monopoly? Shall it be ſaid that political co-exiſtence cannot obtain amongſt thoſe who acknowledge the ſame revelation at a time when the alarming progreſs of infidelity calls upon all men who believe the goſpel to confederate in its defence? Shall religion be the ground of excluding the Catholic from the temple of our conſtitution, into which the Deiſt, and even the Atheiſt, have acceſs, and ſhall we be duped by thoſe falſe alarmiſts who never have fears for the church till there are hopes for the conſtitution. If I admit that the church eſtabliſhment is an object of illiberal jealouſy, ſhall I diminiſh the evil ſhall I ſecure its exiſtence by interpoſing it between the nation and the conſtitution;—by telling a people ardent in the purſuit of their object, that there is no other impediment in their way? No; they are the effectual enemies of the church who do ſo. But, Sir, if I had ever approved of that ſyſtem by which we conſented to be ſlaves

that we might be tyrants, and ſunk this country below the political horizon, that we might excluſively poſſeſs its eminences; could I continue in the ſame mind now that we have broke in upon that ſyſtem with ſecurity;—with ſecurity, did I ſay?—with unexampled and rapidly increaſing proſperity, now that we have diſcovered with what uſury protected and enfranchiſed induſtry repays its obligations. Let us not, therefore, vainly and fooliſhly hope to eternize this incongruous mixture of privilege and excluſion; to perpetuate the ſeparation of the conſtituent from the repreſentative; to keep the Catholic in a conſtant agony of expectation, and the Proteſtant of apprehenſion. Let us not delay that entire political union, on which, without doors, all ranks are now agreed—rather let us ſeize on this auſpicious moment to ratify their wiſhes: thus ſhall we confederate their zeal in the defence of our conſtitution: then, and then only, ſhall we ſtrike terror into our enemies abroad, and ſilence our calumniators at home.

Mr. MASON ſpoke for the rejection of the bill.

Mr. JOHNSON.—Sir, it ſeems to have been generally acknowledged, through the courſe of this debate, that the ſituation of the kingdom required from every honeſt man, a ſincere exertion to encourage, as far as poſſible, a reſpect for government and a zeal for religion amongſt a people, who have ſhewn in many inſtances, too ſtrong a propenſity to reſiſt the one, and to deſpiſe the other. Yet, with this impreſſion upon the mind of every ſerious man, you have been condemned to liſten to harangues which bear the marks of deliberate compoſition, and in which every branch of your government and conſtitution has been repreſented as in a ſtate of corruption and decay—in which the hierarchy of your proteſtant eſtabliſhment has been ridiculed for the abuſe of its dignity, and the miſapplication of its wealth, and the prieſthood of a tolerated religion expoſed to groſs and vehement charges of ſtupid ignorance and contemptible vulgarity. After having the conſtitution of the country and the Miniſters of religion expoſed and derided, by the advocates of the papiſts, you are deſired by the bill now before you, to open the power of the ſtate and parliament to the pretenſions of thoſe papiſts; and you are called upon to do ſo upon no other ſecurity, than ſome declarations of theirs, that they do not mean to alter the conſtitution, or to overturn the proteſtant religion: To truſt the exiſtence of a ſtate to mere declarations, muſt at all times be a hazardous experiment; but to truſt to profeſſions of ſteadineſs, upon the arguments of gentlemen who have ſhewn in themſelves a verſatility of conduct, bordering upon a direct contradiction of their own avowed principles and repeated declarations, would, in my mind, be a degree of credulity, utterly inconſiſtent with the ſober diſcretion of parliament. If, in the year 1792, you had heard, Sir, a young man of conſiderable talents, born of a noble family, (Mr. G. Knox) aſſert, "that as long as Great Britain remains attached to a proteſtant eſtabliſhment and a proteſtant crown, ſo

"long muſt we, being proteſtants, remain the ruling power here, "or the connexion muſt be diſſolved;"—if you had heard him aſſert, "that we could not have a catholic parliament, and remain "long without a catholic king;" if you had heard him aſſert "that the legiſlative power could not be one faith, and the execu-"tive power of another; that the catholics being but men, it was "not in the nature of man but that deſire ſhould grow with grati-"fication, and ambition with power;" if you had found him, for ſuch reaſons, the ſtrong advocate for *proteſtant aſcendancy*—and in the year 1795 had heard the *ſame* man, with all the dignity of high family and untainted character, aſſert againſt his own aſſertions, argue againſt his own arguments, defy his own principles, and inſiſt upon the utility of deſtroying that proteſtant aſcendancy which was in the year 1792 the object of his affection, the efficient cauſe of his family dignity, and of his individual property; if you have ſeen and heard ſuch things, Sir, ſurely it ſhould be a leſſon to us, to pauſe before we give implicit credit to the vague declarations of men who, from their inferior ſituation in life, cannot be ſuppoſed to have the ſame high incentives to a pure and conſiſtent conduct, as men of the rank and conſequence of the perſon to whom I have alluded? But this is not the only inſtance, Sir, which might be produced to induce us to pauſe before we give implicit credit to the profeſſions or arguments of any men. Did the Right Hon. Gentleman who introduced this bill, aſſert within theſe few days that a revenue officer ſhould be deprived of every ſhare of political power, becauſe that revenue officer was peculiarly attached to his native ſovereign, peculiarly bound to the wealth and vigour of the ſtate?—and if he did ſo, will he aſſert that it is no contradiction now to argue that a popiſh prieſt, more peculiarly bound to a foreign power than a revenue officer is to his native King, under deeper impreſſions of gratitude for his benefice, under ſtronger ties of obedience from the vows of his order, loaded with foreign pay and doomed to foreign obedience, is yet fitted and qualified for the higheſt truſt and power in the ſtate, while the revenue officer is diſqualified for exerciſing the loweſt, becauſe he is the immediate ſervant of his King?—But if the modeſty of the Right Hon. Gentleman's nature ſhould make him heſitate at ſubmitting to the conviction of his *own* arguments, let him take the authority not of himſelf, but of his adviſer and his friend (Mr. G. P.)—What did that Hon. Member permit in the year 1783 to be publiſhed under the authority of his name? "There are (ſaid the Hon. Member) in this country "two ſets of men, who are intereſted in promoting a change. The "catholics of the South, the known friends of monarchy; the "preſbyterians of the North, the votaries of republicaniſm; theſe "latter have ſet on the others to make it a common cauſe, "and between them both the *eſtabliſhed church* is *blockaded*; but if "the people who have *eſtabliſhed* the conſtitution, ſhall be over-"powered by thoſe who often attempted to deſtroy it, we ſhall "have them quarrelling for ſeats in parliament, for authority, "and for ſupremacy." Such Sir, is the language which, with

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almoſt prophetic penetration, was uttered in the year 1783, by the perſon who now is the leader of that very blockade on the eſtabliſhed church, which at that time he ſo ardently reſiſted, and ſo pathetically lamented! To that he added a ſolemn declaration that "he "would ſupport with his life and fortune, that conſtitution under "which (he truly ſaid) he had enjoyed every bleſſing." But, Sir, the magnitude of this queſtion is ſuch as to render it neceſſary to try it by a more ſerious inveſtigation than a compariſon of the declarations, or authority of any individuals, however reſpectable. It is ſaid in the preamble of this bill, that it is "*right* and *expedient* "to remove the reſtriction preſerved by the bill of 1793," in favour of the ancient conſtitution: I deny it to be expedient to do ſo; and if there were no temporary inexpediency, I ſhould deny it to be right.—They are both ſerious points, and deſerve to be examined. The expediency muſt be determined by the time, the manner, and the conduct of thoſe who have urged the meaſure forward. —The cauſe of this night's debate has been laid for ſome years.

The right hon. gentleman who introduced this bill, has permitted the authority of his name to be uſed, in order to promulgate to the people that the queſtion in every ſtage of the popiſh claim has been, "whether three millions of loyal ſubjects were to be kept in "a ſtate of degrading ſubjection to a body of one million?"—a mode of ſtating the queſtion, calculated to inflame the paſſions of the multitude, but not to inform the judgment of the ſober part of mankind! It is ſo calculated, becauſe there is not any law of ſubordination in government to which it might not as well be applied, as to the excluding principle of the Britiſh conſtitution.—The addition of the epithet *loyal* to the three millions of papiſts, and declining to give the ſame reſpectable epithet when he ſpeaks of one million of proteſtants, does not ſeem likely to add much to the moderation of the argument. But ſuppoſing ſuch a ſtate of the queſtion to be fitted for argument, I reply, that the aſſertion is not founded in fact. I conſider Great Britain and Ireland, as to all queſtions of conſtitution, invariably intermixed: there is an error in aſſerting the conſtitutions are merely the ſame—there is in truth but *one* conſtitution, and that *one* conſtitution adopted and preſerved in both kingdoms: no part can be changed in either kingdom without inſtantly affecting the other. The repreſentative in parliament therefore, whether of Great Britain or Ireland, in queſtions which affect the conſtitution, not of a particular diſtrict, but of the empire itſelf, ſhould conſider himſelf not as the repreſentative of a local diſtrict, or in a particular kingdom: but deciding upon an imperial intereſt, he ſhould conſider himſelf as the repreſentative of the people of the empire. Such, on this occaſion, I conſider the members of the houſe which I now addreſs, and ſuch I am pleaſed to find a right hon. baronet (Sir H. Langriſhe,) who ſtated the conſtitution as the conſtitution not of one or three, but of twelve millions of people, muſt have conſidered himſelf. Such, Sir, the members of the Britiſh parliament muſt alſo conſider themſelves, when they regard (as they frequently do,) attentively what paſſes in this kingdom. To anſwer then

the arrogant aſſumption of three millions to one million, I ſay, the fact does not ſupport the aſſertion. If the intereſt of parties is to be oppoſed, (which I deny to be neceſſary,) and if that intereſt is to be inflamed by members, I ſay, then, that it is the eſtabliſhed right, the conſtitutional poſſeſſion of nine millions of proteſtant inhabitants, his majeſty's ſubjects, from Orkney to Valentia, which is ſought to be ſhaken by the ambitious claims of a few men, who have endeavoured for the worſt purpoſes to put themſelves at the head of a nominal three millions. God forbid, however, that this queſtion were to be decided by the ſhock of numbers! but if it were, upon their heads be it, who firſt brought their numbers in array. I ſtate the queſtion then, not as it has been ſtated, whether three millions of *loyal* ſubjects are to be kept in a ſtate of degrading ſubjection to a body of one million, (who are not honoured by the right hon. gentleman with the epithet of loyal) but as a queſtion whether *nine* men whoſe names I ſhall ſtate preſently, and who have quitted their ordinary occupations in order to trade in the paſſions of the peaſants of the land, ſhall be permitted to ſeize a moment of public danger to break through the laſt barrier which guards not the Iriſh alone, but the Britiſh conſtitution and the ſettlement of the royal family? I ſtate it not as a queſtion whether three millions are to be kept in a ſtate of degrading ſubjection to one, but as a queſtion the deciſion of which involves the whole of the conſtitution and the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland; and as the ſtrength of Great Britain depends on the ſtability of that connexion, and as her empire extends now from the eaſt to the weſt of the globe, involving in this night's debate almoſt the fate of mankind—if I prove this to be the real ſtate of the queſtion, I prove all that is neceſſary.—If this be the real ſtate of the queſtion, it anſwers itſelf, and leaves nothing of which a wiſe man ſhould enquire, or on which a brave man ſhould heſitate; that it is the real ſtate of the queſtion, a ſhort detail of the facts which accompanied its riſe and progreſs will demonſtrate.—The claims of the papiſts to political power, the progreſs of which has given riſe to the bill before you, commenced in the year 1791. In January 1791, the King's ſpeech ſtates the utmoſt proſperity of the empire; it gives aſſurance of tranquillity, and propoſes a reduction of military eſtabliſhments; the funds of Great Britain and Ireland had riſen to a price which marked the unrivalled credit of the time; all was wealth, tranquillity and power. Let me call the attention of the Houſe to the tone of the popiſh application at that time: The popiſh declaration of the year 1791 ſtates, "It is not for the "Iriſh catholics, armed as their cauſe is with reaſon and with juſ- "tice, *like public foes to ſeek advantage from public calamity*. They "ought to advance their claim at a time moſt favourable to diſcuſ- "ſion when the condition of the empire is flouriſhing and tranquil. "They might ſeem culpable to their country, if affecting to diſ- "ſemble what it were unmanly not to feel, they reſerved their pre- "tenſions in *ambuſcade* to augment the *perplexities* of ſome *critical* "*emergency*." Let any man who hears me, recollect the month of February laſt: the empire ſurrounded by foreign foes, and haraſ-

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ſed by domeſtic traitors—Let him recollect what was then the language of a Right Honorable Member's manifeſto to thirty thouſand deliberators on the conſtitution in Francis-ſtreet; thoſe deliberators were *conjured* and *preſſed* at that moment of diſtreſs, "not to "poſtpone the conſideration of *their* fortunes 'till after the war." Let any man compare the tone of theſe addreſſes, and the times at which they were publiſhed, and then ſay, (in the language of a celebrated ſociety) which was the "moſt ſeaſonable, the moſt conſti-"tutional, and the moſt manly."—In the month of February 1792, the papiſts publiſhed a ſpecification of their claims, in which the utmoſt extent of their wiſhes was declared to be "a right of "voting in *counties only* for *proteſtant* members of parliament." This claim of voting in counties only, and for proteſtant members, publiſhed under the authority of Mr. Edward Byrne, as the utmoſt boundary of the popiſh objects, appeared on the 4th of February 1792, when the proſperity and ſtrength of the empire ſtill continued with undiminiſhed ſplendor. But May 1792 preſented to their wiſhes another ſcene:—The King's proclamation of 21ſt of May 1792, ſtates, "that ſeditious writings and perſons had en-"deavoured to villify and bring into contempt, the wiſe and whole-"ſome proviſions made at the time of the glorious revolution;" and ſtates, "that correſpondence had been entered into with perſons in "foreign parts, to forward the above criminal purpoſes." What followed this change of fortune? From the burning ſoil of domeſtic treachery, and under the impending fires of foreign war, aroſe the pandemonium of Iriſh liberty, the *catholic convention*. Hear the language adopted by that convention, publiſhed by their authority, and compare it with the temperate call upon the wiſdom and purity of the government and conſtitution, publiſhed by the papiſts in October 1791! That convention was conveyed by a circular letter of a Mr. Edward Byrne, and the letter bears a date ſo nearly connected with the date of the King's proclamation, as to ſhew that the meaſure of an illegal convention was hazarded, from the hope that the danger of the times would ſcreen it from puniſhment. The proceedings of that convention were publiſhed in October 1792, and the publication declares to the papiſts of Ireland, "that the "proteſtants have nothing to give but *weakneſs*, and they refuſe to "receive *ſtrength*." It declares, "that the democratic power is not "preſerved—that the three eſtates are not balanced:" it declares, "that the people are amuſed with the ſhadow of a free govern-"ment, while the nation droops under the ſilent working of deſpo-"tiſm;" it calls upon the papiſts of Ireland to "look (for di-"rection and ſupport) to the declarations of the ſeveral ſocieties of "United Iriſhmen, particularly thoſe of Dublin and Belfaſt;" and it terminates with a ſolemn reſolution of thanks to the ſocieties of United Iriſhmen, The very ſame body of papiſts who in their committee on the 10th of February 1791, "confide with all hu-"mility in the *juſtice*, *liberality* and *wiſdom* of parliament," on the 31ſt of October 1792, charge that very parliament with being the *weak* and profligate inſtrument of a "*ſilent deſpotiſm*." This manifeſto of the popiſh convention, appears under the authority of

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the names of nine or ten men, who, on the 23d of December laſt, openly ſolicited the papiſts to demand, *in maſs*, what is called their emancipation. This ſolicitation of the papiſts to come forward in a body, was publiſhed on the 23d of December 1794, and was the conſequence of a meeting held by a Right Hon. Gentleman, with the papiſts' committee, on the day of his landing from England, about the 15th of December, and in which meeting he made an agreement, that if they came forward they ſhould have the ſupport of government, although Lord Fitzwilliam had engaged to poſtpone the queſtion.

I have ſtated, Sir, the thanks of this convention to the Society of United Iriſhmen: but I muſt venture to detain you a little longer, in order to ſtate the intimacy of connexion, the identity of ſentiments, opinions and conduct between the two bodies, called the catholic committee, and this ſociety of United Iriſhmen. This catholic committee is compoſed of nine men and a ſecretary (whoſe names appear in their addreſs to the papiſts of Ireland on the 23d of December 1794,) and it appeared to have emanated from the popiſh convention of 1792. A conſiderable number of the individuals who compoſe this committee are themſelves members of the ſociety of United Iriſhmen. The popiſh convention had in the year 1792 choſen for its ſecretary a gentleman of the name of Theobald Wolfe Tone; he was an United Iriſhman, had acted at times as ſecretary to that body, and was introduced to the notice of the papiſts by the publication of a pamphlet written with ſome ſpirit in the year 1791, entitled "An *Argument* on behalf of the *Catholics of Ire-* "*land.*" In this pamphlet the writer inſiſts on the "abſtract right "of the *people* to reform the *legiſlature.*" He declines however, to argue the point for this animated reaſon—"After *Paine* (ſaid he) "who will, or who need be heard on the ſubject?" The object of the book is to ſhew the deplorable ſtate of Ireland ariſing from her connexion with Great Britain; to lament the humiliated ſtate of his country in being without "ambaſſadors, army, or navy;"—to call the tranſactions of 1782 (which aſſerted the independency of the legiſlature of Ireland, but left, unfortunately in his opinion, the dependency of the crown untouched) "a bungling and imper- "fect buſineſs;"—to prove that if the papiſts are admitted into the legiſlature, a parliamentary reform muſt follow, and that ſuch a reform, produced by ſuch means, will "*enable Ireland to exiſt as an* "*independent ſtate.*" He aſſerts that the circumſtance of our exiſting as an independent ſtate is an event that "infallibly muſt ariſe," and that by ſuch means as he has pointed out we ſhall then be "as "competent to our own government, regulation and defence, as any "ſtate in Europe." He talks of the "infinite reſources and pro- "vocations to independence which (he aſſerts) every hour brings "forth to Ireland." He ſpeaks of the National Aſſembly of France as "a body of repreſentatives not of their conſtituents "merely, but of man, whoſe nature they have exalted beyond the "limits that even Providence ſeemed to have bounded it by;" and he aſſigns as the principal cauſe of the exalted ſplendour of that body "in that aſſembly *proteſtants ſit indiſcriminately with catholics.*"

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—He adds, that, "when he contraſts the National Aſſembly of "France with other great bodies which he could name, he confeſſes "he feels little propenſity to boaſt that he has the honour to be an "Iriſhman and a proteſtant." And he cloſes by an addreſs to the people of Ireland, in theſe words, "Let them once cry *reform* and "the *catholics*, and Ireland is *free, independent* and *happy*." This Argument on *behalf of the catholics of Ireland*, of which, in fact, the various doctrines and addreſſes publiſhed by the United Iriſhmen are but an amplification, was circulated through Ireland with the name of Tone annexed to it. The principles contained in it were conſidered as a ſufficient inducement to the popiſh convention to elect him their ſecretary, and to reward his ſervices by a vote of 1500l. the whole of which I underſtand has been paid within theſe few days. To leave no doubt as to the reform which was to be the effect of catholic emancipation, the United Iriſhmen publiſhed and the papiſts adopted a ſpecific plan of equal repreſentation, conſiſting of twenty-three articles: the firſt of which was, "that the "nation, for the purpoſe of repreſentation ſolely ſhould be divided "into 300 electorates, formed by combination of pariſhes, and as "nearly as poſſible equal in point of population. The 9th article "is, that every male of ſound mind of the age of 21 years, who "had maintained a family for ſix months in any electorate, ſhould "be entitled to vote for a repreſentative."—The laſt ſentence of this production, is an emphatic call upon the peaſants of Ireland, to "hang this plan up in their cabbins—to think of it over and over "again, and not to throw it by in deſpair."—I have now gone through the ſeries of provocatives prepared for the peaſants of Ireland by the United Iriſhmen, adopted by the popiſh convention, and infuſed into the boſom of the lower, by the wealth and induſtry of ſome few among the higher claſſes of that religion. But it may be aſked, did the papiſts adopt ſuch doctrines? I anſwer by deducing my proof from the very centre of their own declarations. I hold in my hand, Sir, a letter, ſigned by a Mr. Thomas Braughal, in which he ſtiles himſelf chairman of the catholics of Dublin, addreſſed to a Dr. Wm. Drennan, as chairman of the United Iriſhmen, and in the following words:

"Sir, as chairman of the catholics of Dublin, I am ordered to "tranſmit a copy of their proceedings on Wedneſday, October "31; we truſt you will find in that paper a *juſt reflection of your* "*principles*, no leſs honourable to yourſelf than advantageous to "the true intereſts of your country.—I am, Sir, &c."

What thoſe principles were of which the proceedings of the papiſts were a *juſt reflection*, I have already ſtated. If you would call before you a ſubſtantial image of the effects of thoſe principles, look to the words of the king's courts of juſtice: See one of the principals of this union outlawed, and another convicted on a charge of high treaſon; another outlawed for felony; others fined and impriſoned for ſlanderous libels; the ſociety itſelf diſperſed by the civil magiſtrates, and its papers ſeized. Can the papiſts deny a knowledge of the acts flowing from theſe principles? The flight and outlawry of Mr. Rowan and Mr. Tandy, were public: the

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imprisonment of the others, and the dispersion of the society, were public: that Mr. Tone was involved in the treason of Doctor Jackson, was public: Since the month of June last, the indictment against Jackson, containing the paper of information to France, drawn by Tone, was public: yet, this very Mr. Tone, the papists, in the month of April last, attempt to adorn by their thanks, and actually rewarded with their money. But with a pretended three millions in the train of this committee—with a junction in persons and in principles with the United Irishmen—with defenders rising in every quarter of the kingdom—the wealthy plundered—the feeble and unresisting slaughtered, this papist committee were not hardy enough to venture the present proposition to parliament! They desired no more than the elective franchise; and in their proceedings of October 1792, they avowed that "they would satisfactorily acquiesce in having the king, the house of peers, the house of commons and the church of Ireland *exclusively* protestant!" To sustain them in the boldness of the present attempt, they wanted one junction more:—They wanted a junction with a lord lieutenant, who would be ready to agree with the king's ministers to *postpone* a question which his friends here fomented and brought forward:—they wanted a junction with a minister, who would be ready to bring down the whole artillery of government, plant it on the walls of Francis-street chapel, and by the hands of a mob, batter the parliament of the kingdom:—they sought for that junction, and they found it! The men, whom (in their own words,) I have described to you, you have seen seated at the table, and known to be closetted in the council, of the very person whom you have also seen clothed in the robes and seated on the throne of your sovereign. In reviewing thus the facts and circumstances which have occurred from the year 1791, to this time, in comparing their connexions and their tendencies, you arrive at the true ground of this question; you discover the characters of the persons who urge it forward, and the ends to which their labours have been directed. It appears, that the year 1791 was a period when the nation was powerful and the government without embarrassment: The tone of the papists was then modest; their object was moderate—and they gave the instance of their having chosen a period of prosperity to urge their pretensions as the evidence of the justice of their claim, of their loyalty, and of their integrity. They were not even contented with general evidence of their conduct:—They added a solemn declaration of their principles.—They entered into an awful contract with their king and his parliament, and declared "that they ought to be considered as public foes who should urge such a claim at any other time than a time of public tranquillity." They went still further: lest any doubt should be entertained of the extent of their views and the purity of their intentions, they published a solemn declaration of their wishes. On the 4th of February, 1792, they bounded by specific lines, and defined by specific terms, the extent and nature of their objects; they closed with their fellow subjects, and with the legislature for ever. But the splendid sun of imperial prosperity

ſperity which had called forth this harveſt of honour, generoſity and good faith, was ſoon to ſet—the night of foreign war and domeſtic treaſon overſpread the land: Then, in the hope that the darkneſs would conceal the crime, was this wholeſome crop trodden under foot; then was ſought for, with a profligate induſtry, every poiſonous weed that the wealth and luxuriance of the time had unhappily given vigour to; then, inſtead of humble petitions and appeals to the liberality and wiſdom of the legiſlature, were heard and ſeen illegal conventions illegally ſummoned; then did thoſe conventions publiſh ſaucy invective againſt that conſtitution, of whoſe bleſſings they at the ſame inſtant ſought the benefit; then did they call that *corrupt* by the intermixture with which they deſired to purify and adorn themſelves; then did they fling, with a vulgar malignity, opprobrious epithets at the heads of thoſe very miniſters whoſe wiſdom they had before applauded, and to whoſe liberality they had bowed as grateful debtors; then, and not till then, was ſeen the horrible audacity of men, daring enough with one hand to hold out an humble petition beſeeching the favour of a beneficent ſovereign, and in the other hand graſping an union with the impriſoned libeller, the outlawed felon, and the convicted traitor; the horrible audacity of men claiming a right to repoſe in the arms of the conſtitution, and at the ſame inſtant applauding the diſturbers of our peace, and conſoling the traitor to our king. You have now ſeen the popiſh committee connected with the miniſters of the crown, and leaders in parliament; you have ſeen that popiſh committee connected with the popiſh convention, and both connected with the Iriſh convention and Mr. Tone! Trained within the body of the United Iriſhmen, and iſſuing forth in ſubſtantial treaſon, you have ſeen "thoſe clamorous harbingers of blood and death," Mr. Hamiltion Rowan, Mr. Tone, and Mr. Jackſon; you have ſeen the ſufferings of ſome criminals alleviated and the talents of others rewarded by ſubſcriptions, raiſed by the efforts of thoſe committees and conventions; you have ſeen the accomplice of treaſon ſecretary to popiſh delegates, laying a popiſh petition at the foot of the throne; you have ſeen connected by a long but unbroken chain (at a great diſtance I admit, and I am ſure without any ſimilarity of intention) the Miniſter and the traitor: Thus you have ſeen, Sir, the common experiment made on the ſubtlety of the common electric fluid; where, when the bar is charged with the elemental fire, if an hundred men were to join hands, the ſtroke will be communicated from the firſt to the laſt. Modern patriotiſm is to the mind as the elemental fire is to the body; and the ſhock which commences in the cell of Newgate, may terminate within the walls of parliament! But am I bold enough to accuſe three millions of the king's ſubjects with cultivating ſuch principles and holding ſuch conduct? God forbid! Human nature, Sir, is not ſo depraved as that you could find in any climate, or under any government, three millions ſo loſt to all ſenſe of goodneſs. The million is always honeſt, always ſimple, it means its own happineſs, and it has a right to purſue its own happineſs. But to be led and

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to follow is the inevitable nature of the million. The conduct and designs of the leaders, therefore, are the only sources of true information to the legislator. The wretched peasant, whose head is counted to swell this awful number, knows nothing of all this: He is called upon by his priest to subscribe, and he is told that Mr. Grattan is to relieve him from rent and wretchedness—The innocent man blesses Mr. Grattan, and subscribes the little produce of his sweat. The miserable dupe, plundered of his little earning, returns to his cottage—and sunk in repose, he dreams of nothing but less labour for himself, and more food and raiment for his children. But this innocent man, Sir, is under the guidance of such leaders, the more dangerous as he is the more innocent—I therefore deem it *inexpedient* to admit such leaders to any share of power. We should be the more careful, Sir, in a country where government seems to be the science of all—and obedience the habit of none.—But we are told by Lord Fitzwilliam, that "these men will rebel if we do not comply." Why, Sir, if they will rebel—if their loyalty is so loose a cloak as to be thrown off in every contest for rank and power—let them rebel!—Is it not better they should rebel as they are, than that we should admit them to draw their swords in the presence of the throne itself, and let treason stalk within the walls of parliament? But the preamble to the bill asserts, not only that it is *expedient*, but that it is *right* to remove these restraints.—If by right is meant any such thing as *natural* right to political power, I will not argue with any man who holds such language: I know of no method so proper for his conviction, as the cell of Mr. Jackson in Ireland, or that of Tom Paine in France. But if by right is meant any claim to privilege springing from the particular constitution of this country, or from the general principles of civil society, I must take leave to examine a little into that constitution and those principles.

[Here Mr. Johnson entered into some detail of the British constitution, and what he called its excluding principle and connection with the protestant church, which began to take its present form in the reign of Elizabeth. He endeavoured to trace the effects of that principle and connection through the different periods of the British history. He called the attention of the house to the series of eminent men by whom it had been formed, extended and regulated.]

He concluded thus: "That excluding principle which established Elizabeth upon the throne, and in establishing her laid the foundation of that edifice which has astonished mankind—the British Empire; that principle which survived the mistaken perseverance of Charles the First, and the hypocritical tyranny of Cromwell; which bowed the hereditary dignity of James to the dust, and raised the cool sagacity of William to empire—which, in a happier hour, bound the fortunes of Britain and the house of Hanover together, and will continue to bind them for ever; that principle which was applied and interwoven into the British constitution by the prudent foresight of Sir William Cecil; which was

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adhered to by the wiſeſt and honeſteſt men in the parliaments of Charles the Firſt and Second; which was ſeiſed and relied on as the ſafeguard of Britain by my Lord Somers and that conſtellation of able men who, with him, produced the revolution; that principle which has been ſince adhered to by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke in the year 1790, was acknowledged by Mr. Fox in the year 1791, and has been hitherto admitted in Ireland by every man who now argues for its deſtruction; that excluding principle and proteſtant eſtabliſhment, (to adopt a dictatorial term from a late manifeſto—but to adopt it in a better cauſe), that excluding principle and proteſtant eſtabliſhment *ſhall not* be ſhaken by Mr. Byrne or Mr. Keogh, or any of their coadjutors."

The SECRETARY at WAR (Col. DOYLE). Having been the *firſt* in parliament who had declared myſelf in favour of the *total emancipation* of the catholic body, I feel it neceſſary to ſay a few words. I ſhall take up but a ſmall portion of the time of the houſe at this late hour, having ſo frequently experienced its indulgence in ſpeaking at large upon the ſubject.

When the catholic meaſure came firſt before parliament, I ſaw diſtinctly (after the beſt conſideration I could give it) that true policy as well as juſtice required that the emancipation ſhould be complete. I was convinced that the beſt method of uniting ALL deſcriptions of ſubjects in ſupport of the conſtitution, was by giving ALL an EQUAL intereſt in its defence. I could not comprehend the idea of *fractional freedom* and making the catholic ſeven-eighths free.

I wiſhed to remove thoſe barriers which, by dividing our people, had ſo long weakened the energy of the nation.—I wiſhed alſo to put the queſtion at reſt for ever: I thought it abſurd to ſuppoſe the catholics would look no further; they were men, and muſt have the feelings and propenſities of men;—and I know "That the "higher we aſcend the hill, the more extended becomes the proſ-"pect." If I were anxious to conciliate and unite all our people in defence of our King, our country, and our conſtitution, *at that time*, how much more ſo muſt I feel now: half meaſures are at no time good; at this moment they are ruinous.—I would give generouſly, and have *no craving void left aching in the breaſt*.

There are but three new arguments that have been urged againſt the meaſure. Some gentlemen ſay the extent of the gift would endanger church and ſtate.—Other gentlemen ſay the catholics are unreaſonable in contending for the trivial articles which remain to be granted. I ſhall leave theſe arguments to anſwer each other; only obſerving, that if little remains, it is leſs worth diſputing, unleſs gentlemen are too generous to think of offering ſo ſmall a preſent. The third argument is more ſerious; and if it could be proved, would very much alter my opinion. It is, that the preſent diſturbances originate from the catholic body: Sir, no man regrets more than I do thoſe diſturbances; and no one would go further to puniſh thoſe midnight plunderers;—but I think it as unwiſe as it is unfair to viſit the crimes of a few of the moſt ignorant and ill-diſpoſed upon the whole body. It is certainly proba-

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ble the preſent rioters are catholics, becauſe the lower claſs in the country is, for the moſt part, catholic. In the riots in 1780 in London, the mob, which had nearly deſtroyed that capital, was compoſed excluſively of proteſtants; but no perſon ever imputed their guilt to the whole body of Engliſh proteſtants. If a riot happens at Conſtantinople, I think it is probable that the rioters would be found to be Turks; but I would not, therefore, burn the Koran, and puniſh the Divan. But there is another reaſon why I cannot believe it, in any degree, imputable to the catholic body, becauſe I think it would be, to the laſt degree, abſurd to ſuppoſe that they ſhould endeavour by a political ſuicide, to overturn the conſtitution at the very inſtant they were ſoliciting to be admitted into it. Taking, therefore, into conſideration, the whole of the arguments, as well as our actual ſituation, I am decidedly in favour of the meaſure, and ſhall give my vote for the committal of the bill.

Mr. O'CONNOR. I ſhould not have treſpaſſed on your time at this late hour, was it not that as often as this important ſubject has been agitated, ſince I had a ſeat in this houſe, I have contented myſelf with giving ſilent votes, for the moſt unqualified emancipation of my Catholic countrymen, and I have done ſo, from conviction of the juſtice of their claims to freedom, and of the inexpediency and folly of continuing to ſacrifice the civil and political rights of the people, for the purpoſe of aggrandizing a *few families*, under the maſk of promoting religion.—But, ſir, the times call for ſomething more than ſilent votes.—The ſituation in which we are ſo unaccountably placed, is ſo critical, and the bill, under your conſideration, involves ſuch conſequences in its train, that every man who is not wholly indifferent to the welfare of his country, muſt feel himſelf called on, to lay aſide every leſſer conſideration, and to deliver his opinion, with that freedom, and that boldneſs, by which only the country can be ſaved.

What do the whole of the arguments which have been advanced on this night againſt the emancipation of our Catholic countrymen by the gentlemen of the oppoſite ſide of the houſe amount to? To mere aſſertions that it would deſtroy our conſtitution in church and ſtate. This is not the only inſtance in this country, in which the moſt egregious job has been concealed under a ſpecious phraſeology. One would imagine from the language held by the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Pelham) that the people of this country were in the actual enjoyment of the Britiſh conſtitution in all its purity, and that it had been in this country, that the experiment of that conſtitution had been made, by which it has become the admiration of the world.—Is it that the condition of the people of Ireland correſponds ſo well with the great natural advantages of their country, that we are to infer, that their civil and political conſtitution, was of that immaculate nature, which the right hon. gentleman, (Mr. Pelham) has repreſented it? Is it becauſe we were the moſt wretched, and the moſt miſerable nation in Europe, as long as this ſyſtem of monopoly and excluſion, for which the gentlemen on the oppoſite ſide

of the houſe contend, under the title of conſtitution in ſtate and church, was in its moſt entire ſtate, and that we have emerged from that wretchedneſs and miſery in an exact proportion, as we have deſtroyed this ſyſtem of monopoly, by extending the bleſſings of freedom to our Catholic countrymen, that we ſhould now deſiſt from our labours? Is it becauſe we have heard thoſe gentlemen at the oppoſite ſide of the houſe, year after year, ever ſince this queſtion has been agitated, predict the ruin of the country, from extending the conſtitution to our Catholic countrymen, and that we have ſeen the country thrive in an exact proportion as it has been extended; that we ſhould now ſtop ſhort on their authority, and conſecrate the remainder of the ſyſtem of monopoly and excluſion? Before we riſk every thing in defence of a ſyſtem, upon authority which has hitherto proved ſo utterly fallacious, let us enquire into its merits. I will ſuppoſe the worſt of ſyſtems, and I will leave it to the advocates of this ſyſtem, to ſhew, in what it differs from this ſyſtem of theirs, which they have conſecrated under the myſtical words of conſtitution in church and ſtate.—I will ſuppoſe the whole repreſentation of the people of Ireland converted in a ſubject of traffic, and a monopoly of the trade given to a few families, with an exception of that ſmall portion of freedom, which falls to the ſhare of the counties.—I will ſuppoſe, even this pittance aſſailed by theſe monopoliſts, by their profuſe diſtributions of jobs and of patronage, and by their appointing the men of the beſt intereſts in their ſeveral counties, for ſeats for their boroughs, whom they could find mean enough to accept them, on the condition of ſervitude and wages in ſo vile an occupation; I will ſuppoſe theſe wholeſale dealers in our rights and liberties, coming from their rotten boroughs, and from the counties they had debauched with their attendant ſupporters of conſtitution in church and ſtate, to diſcharge their cargo at the ſeat of government, at the counting-houſe of an Engliſh factor, bartering an unqualified ſacrifice of Iriſh trade, of Iriſh induſtry, of Iriſh rights, and of Iriſh character, at the feet of Engliſh domination, and of Engliſh avarice. For what? What ſhall I ſuppoſe the price of this infernal cargo, like Pandora's box, a collection of every ill that can afflict mankind? The whole nation of Ireland would bluſh to hear it.—They would bluſh at their own degradation.—Nothing leſs than the moſt unqualified ſacrifice of every thing in this unfortunate country that could exalt thoſe Farmers General of our rights and liberties, and of every thing that could debaſe an injured, inſulted, and impoveriſhed people.—Here is a ſyſtem by which our national character would be degraded in the eyes of ſurrounding nations. Here is a ſyſtem by which the people of this country would be doubly impoveriſhed, to pay for that treaſon which was to revile and villify them in the legiſlature of their own country, and to pay for that treaſon which was to ſacrifice their deareſt intereſt to the aggrandizement of another nation: *I call upon the gentlemen of the oppoſite ſide of the houſe, to ſhew in what this execrable ſyſtem differs from the conſtitution in church and ſtate, for which they contend.*—And yet it is on the continuance of this ſyſtem you have been told your lives,

lives, your liberties, your properties, and your religion depend; it is on the continuance of this syſtem you have been told your conſtitution depends—nay, to fill up the meaſures of their effrontery, there are men who will unbluſhingly tell you that this ſyſtem ſo profitable to them, and ſo ruinous to their country, *ſhall be your conſtitution itſelf.*——*Fortunately it is no longer a ſubject of contention between the Proteſtants and the Catholics*, for every man in this country except monopoliſts, and thoſe in pay of monopoliſts, whether Proteſtants, Preſbyterians, or Catholics, have declared themſelves equally intereſted in the deſtruction of this odious ſyſtem.—Fortunately the Proteſtants and Preſbyterians of Ireland have at length diſcovered the folly of ſacrificing their own rights, and the proſperity of their country, in a criminal attempt to exclude three-fourths of their countrymen from the bleſſings of freedom, for no other purpoſe than to perpetuate a ſyſtem, in which a *few families* are unnaturally exalted at the expence of millions of their countrymen, as unnaturally debaſed.—But it is no longer a ſecret that the men who oppoſe the abolition of religious diſtinctions in our civil and political concerns, when the general voice of the nation has concurred in ſo wiſe, ſo juſt, and ſo politic a meaſure, are the men who uſurp the whole political power of the country, the men who have converted the whole repreſentation of Ireland into family patrimony:—to the poverty, to the oppreſſion, and to the diſgrace of the nation, and to the monſtrous aggrandizement of themſelves, their relatives, and their ſervile adherents.—*Theſe are the men who oppoſe Catholic Emancipation*—and why?—Becauſe Catholic emancipation would be incompatible with their accurſed monopoly.—Here lies the incapacity of the Catholics to participate in the freedom of their country; here lies the *excellence* of the preſent conſtitution in church and ſtate.—In this is compriſed the whole guilt of our Catholic countrymen, and in the eyes of men of this deſcription, the ſame incapacity would attach itſelf to angels from heaven, if the abolition of their accurſed monopoly was to make any part of the conſequence.—Let thoſe men who flatter themſelves that they will be able to continue the old ſyſtem of monopoly and excluſion, by which the few are raiſed on the necks of the many, riſk what they pleaſe in its defence.—But let me conjure you, who are without the pale of their political communion, to conſider the important change which has taken place in the public mind, to conſider the language which has been ſpoken by all deſcriptions of men, from one end of the kingdom to the other.—Let me conjure you to conſider that you are no longer legiſlating for the barbarous ignorant ages which are gone by, but that you muſt now legiſlate for the more enlightened and the more intelligent age in which you live, and for the ſtill more enlightened ages which are to come.—It is on theſe ſafe and liberal grounds I invite you to weigh the arguments which have been advanced on this night againſt the emancipation of your Catholic countrymen.—An Hon. Gent. [Mr. Ogle] ſays, if you emancipate them, they will get the upper hand, and that they will erect a

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Popiſh government;—and a noble Lord [Lord Kingſborough] ſays, that Catholic emancipation is incompatible with Proteſtant freedom, which aſſertions are founded on the ſuppoſition that the Catholics pay ſuch implicit obedience to their clergy in religious matters, that they will deſtroy our liberties by paying the like implicit obedience to the civil magiſtrate in political concerns.—Is there any thing in the conduct of the Catholics at this day, to warrant theſe charges?—Is it not harrowing up charges from the barbarous ages that are gone by?—Aſk the Catholic clergy, and they will tell you that their power has declined.—Aſk the Proteſtant gentry from one end of the country to the other, and they will tell you that the ſuperſtitious power of the catholic clergy is at an end. But have you not heard the right hon. gent. [Mr. Pelham] on this night lament the decline of this power?—have you not heard him in the vileſt proſtitution of terms lament its decline, as the decline of a wholeſome controul—whilſt it is with joy I expreſs my ſatisfaction, that all ſuperſtitious controul over the minds of my catholic countrymen is at an end, as that circumſtance, which puts the juſtice of their claims to freedom beyond all doubt, I cannot, nor will not, ſuppreſs my deteſtation and abhorrence of the right hon. gentleman's [Mr. Pelham's] doctrine, which would make a ſuperſtitious a wholeſome controul.—As this doctrine of paſſive obedience, which would revive the reign of ignorance and ſuperſtition, is the doctrine of ſome deſpots, who having ſome infernal ſyſtem of oppreſſion to ſupport, and ſhrinking from the light of reaſon, would re-plunge us into that darkneſs and obſcurity we have eſcaped—backed then by the authority of the catholic clergy, backed by the authority of the proteſtant gentry, and backed by the ſtill more general authority of the general obſervation of every man within and without theſe walls, from one end of the kingdom to the other,—I will aſſume it as a fact, that the ſuperſtitious controul of the catholic clergy over the catholic mind is at an end. What becomes of the inſecurity of the proteſtants from the catholics ſacrificing your liberties by paying a like implicit obedience to the civil magiſtrates? Is there any thing like this in the conduct of the catholics? Has the hon. gent. and the noble lord who have made theſe charges, found the catholics ſo criminally indifferent to the bleſſings of civil and political liberty?—Have thoſe gentlemen who have left no *ſecret means* untried to defeat catholic freedom, found them ſo criminally tame and ſubmiſſive under the preſſure of civil and political excluſion? Is it a fact that the catholic laity have been ſo ſlack and ſo backward in the purſuit of civil and political liberty, as to require the incitement of their clergy? Or is it the characteriſtic of the clergy of any religion to be very ardent in the purſuit after civil and political liberty?—I put it to the gentlemen at the oppoſite ſide of the houſe, does the current of public opinion at this time in any nation in Europe, run in favour of deſpotiſm, or of popery, or of popiſh government?—But theſe gentlemen do not perceive the contradictory nature of the arguments they have this night advanced againſt catholic freedom.—At one time they repreſent them as a

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ſet of men ſo prieſt-ridden, as to endanger the conſtitution, by erecting a popiſh ſlaviſh government; in the ſame breath they repreſent them as overthrowing the conſtitution by their democratical and republican principles, ſerving up at the ſame inſtant the moſt heterogeneous compoſitions that were ever offered to the human mind. But I refer thoſe gentlemen to the hiſtory of mankind, where they will find that the men who have been really and dangerouſly prieſt-ridden, have invariably borne the yoke of civil and religious deſpotiſm with patience and reſignation, but that whenever they had aſſumed ſufficient courage to aſſert their civil and political rights, it was not until after they had thrown off the tyranny of the prieſthood.—Reaſoning from this indiſputable fact, inſtead of agreeing with the gentlemen oppoſite, that the firm tone in which the catholics had demanded their freedom, ſhould be a ground for refuſal —I ſhall aſk no better proof that they are entitled to liberty, than their having had the ſpirit to claim it.

But the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe knowing the weakneſs of theſe contradictory arguments, have had recourſe to prophecy. They have entrenched themſelves in the faſtneſſes of futurity, and in the ſpirit of divination they have accuſed us, who are advocates for catholic freedom, with the ruin of poſterity. To this prophetic accuſation I anſwer, as far as a prophetic accuſation admits of an anſwer, that the dark ages of ignorance and ſuperſtition have ever proved congenial to the tyranny of prieſts and deſpots---but that the independence which has ariſen from the intercourſe of nation with nation---from the invention of the mariner's compaſs, and the knowledge which has flowed from the invention of the preſs, have proved fatal to its continuance. Look round the world and you will find in thoſe countries where foreign commerce is diſcouraged, and where the invention of the preſs is unknown, that deſpotiſm uniformly prevails over liberty:—look to China and the Eaſt Indies; look to Perſia---to the Ottoman and the African empires---thoſe immenſe portions of the globe, where foreign commerce is diſcouraged, and where the invention of the preſs is either diſuſed or unknown---and you will find the civil and political rights of the people immerſed in ignorance, ſuperſtition, and abject ſervility---the ſport of the moſt rapacious deſpotiſm. In theſe countries the ears of the governing powers are never grated with the harſh ſounds of the rights of man ---no; all is deſpotiſm on the part of the governors, all is paſſive obedience on the part of the people. Turn your eyes from theſe wretched countries to the ſeveral nations of Europe, and you will find how uniformly civil, political, and religious liberty, have taken place of civil, political and religious ſlavery, in proportion as foreign commerce has been encouraged, and as the preſs has been protected. See how uniformly theſe cauſes and effects correſpond---and if any one of you doubt that theſe great cauſes are at this moment operating thoſe ſalutary effects, I refer him to the deſpots of Europe, and this war in which they have immolated ſo many human ſacrifices, and in which they have deluged all Europe with ſuch torrents of blood, and their preſent fears for their darling

darling deſpotiſm, ſhall be their anſwers. But it is ſome conſolation to me to reflect, that the avarice of theſe deſpots, which has tempted them to encourage foreign commerce in their dominions, and the vanity or neceſſity which has led them, or obliged them to give ſome protection to education and the preſs, is at this moment ſowing the ſeeds of that independence and knowledge which will one day cruſh that deſpotiſm even which they and their blood-hounds have diſgraced.——Impreſſed with theſe great and important truths, is it when our country is becoming commercial under all its artificial diſadvantages;---is it when we have thrown off ſome of the ſhackles of our trade, and when by paſſing this bill, by creating a people, we ſhall be enabled to reſtore it to perfect freedom, that we are to reject this bill through the fear of deſtroying poſterity? Is it when knowledge is progreſſive amongſt us, when the youth of the nation are giving ſuch brilliant examples that liberality of thought is the offspring of education? Is it when our catholic countrymen are diſplaying ſuch eminent talents in the purſuit after civil and political liberty; talents which I am ſorry to ſay we have had many examples this night to prove how much more eaſy it is to vilify than to rival or imitate? Is it under theſe circumſtances that we are to entertain fears for poſterity? Is it when our countrymen have reſumed their reaſon in ſuch an eminent degree, that we ſhould ſuſpect them of relapſing into ignorance and ſuperſtition? Is it when our catholic countrymen are claiming their civil and political rights, with the addreſs and firmneſs of men of enlightened minds, that we ſhould ſuſpect them of relapſing into ſlavery and a Popiſh government, baſely ſurrendering the nobleſt privileges of man? Never ſhall ſuch tinſel reaſonings make me ſee the ruin of my country in the actual *freedom* of my countrymen;---never ſhall ſuch weak arguments diſſuade me from an act of immutable juſtice, where the rights and liberties of millions of my countrymen were at ſtake upon the iſſue:---No; on this head the proſpect is a bright one, and accurſed be that man who, for intereſted motives, would darken or obſcure its luſtre.

So much for the danger of the conſtitution in ſtate---but the church is in danger. What is that part of the ſyſtem to which the proteſtant religion is under ſuch obligations? What is that part of the ſyſtem with whoſe deſtruction, the deſtruction of the proteſtant religion is ſo cloſely connected? It is ſimply the ſyſtem of converſion —but is it a ſyſtem of converſion from conviction? No: it ſhuts every avenue leading to conviction;—it cloſes every door by which a catholic could enter the proteſtant church---they have been barred by thoſe rewards and puniſhments which ſhort-ſighted bigotry invented for the purpoſe of forcing religious opinions. By this ſyſtem you have expoſed the catholic who is willing to follow the dictates of conviction, to the execration of his own ſect for deſerting them, becauſe he appears to have done ſo, to eſcape the penalties annexed to adherence; and you have expoſed him to the contempt of the proteſtants, whoſe tenets you wiſh him to em-

brace, by making him appear to them as a man who had ſold his principles, his religion, and his *God*—for no other purpoſe than to gain the immunities you hold out to converſion;—ſo that inſtead of promoting your religion—you have called forth the dread of execration and contempt to ſteel the catholic mind againſt that converſion you affect to promote, and to attach him to that religion from which you wiſh to eſtrange him.

Thus it is with narrow-minded bigotry, ever defeating its own ends by the means it employs to attain them.—You have not its heats nor its paſſions to excuſe you, but you have had the experience of its example to direct you; ceaſe, then, to preſcribe to the Almighty the extent and manner of the adoration he ſhall receive; ceaſe to place your rewards and puniſhments in competition with his, for you cannot but obſerve how thoroughly the blaſphemous preſumption has expoſed the impotency of the attempt.—Act like legiſlators; leave the way to conviction and converſion as free and as open as the ſuperiority of the tenets of your religion appears to you clear and indiſputable: act like men ſenſible of their duty to your creator, and preſume not to meddle with opinions he has not given you faculties to underſtand, and which require his omniſcience to controul: away with that ſyſtem which exacts the ſacrifice of the civil and political rights of the people, for the ineffectual purpoſe of promoting religion; we have tried it long enough in this unfortunate country to prove its inefficacy; it has had free ſcope amongſt us ever ſince the paſſing the law againſt recuſants in the reign of Eliz. until within theſe few years that we have begun on its abolition; and if you would judge fairly of the merits of the ſyſtem, and of its abolition by their effects, I call on you, on this night, to chooſe between centuries of diſunion, of civil wars, and of wretchedneſs unexampled in any nation of the globe, and a few years rapid progreſs in union, in civilization, and in the induſtry of the people.—But I find it is not enough to have combated their laſt objection in its own ſhape; it is not enough that I have proved to you that you have not promoted your religion by this ſyſtem of perſecution; for in oppoſition to the profeſſions of the tolerant principles of thoſe gentlemen who oppoſe this bill, I do aſſert that every the leaſt diſability on account of religious opinions, makes part of the ſyſtem of perſecution.—The objection makes its appearance in another ſhape, and the dangers which were ſaid to threaten the proteſtant religion from catholic emancipation, have been made by a right hon. gentleman [Mr. Pelham] to re-appear in the ſhape of dangers which he ſays threaten the proteſtant eſtabliſhment.—He has confounded the eſtabliſhment with the religion, and by an artful tranſmigration, he has made the eſtabliſhment to ſtand for the ſoul of the proteſtant religion; and after we have defeated the objection under the colours of the one, he has made it to rally, Antæus like, with additional ſtrength, under the colours of the other; I ſay with additional ſtrength, for I am aware that proteſtant eſtabliſhment is a word of that myſtical meaning in this houſe, that thoſe who would wiſh to retain it in that ſtate of conſecration

ſecration in which it has been placed by the prieſthood in the days of our moſt inveterate bigotry, have a conſiderable advantage over me, who would examine its meaning before the tribunal of reaſon; it is their intereſt to confound the eſtabliſhment with your religion, in order that it may derive all the ſanctity of the religion itſelf, it is mine to ſeparate them; but they may as well attempt to confound the military eſtabliſhment, by which the officers and ſoldiers are paid, with the tactics and manœuvres which it is their duty to learn.

In order to anſwer the laſt objection, it will be neceſſary to prove that the proteſtant eſtabliſhment would undergo no alteration from the emancipation of the catholics, or that if it was to undergo an alteration, the proteſtant religion, ſo far from being injured, would be highly benefited by the change.—And I prefer for the latter, becauſe I believe, in my ſoul, that if ſome very material alteration be not ſpeedily made in our religious eſtabliſhments, there will be an end very ſpeedily not only to all religion amongſt us, but to all moral principle without which religion is a farce.—As the legiſlature of this country have been miſtaken in their attempt to promote religion by their ſyſtem of perſecution, ſo alſo they have been utterly miſtaken in the nature and effects of religious eſtabliſhments, they have confounded the intereſt of the clergy, with the intereſt of religion, and they imagined, that, in proportion as they enriched the proteſtant clergy, they were promoting the proteſtant religion; and that, by dooming the catholic clergy to have no eſtabliſhment whatſoever, they were conſigning the catholic religion to eternal oblivion.—Was I on a ſubject upon which I could expect any ſhare of candour, I would reſt the whole argument on the fact, I would aſk has the proteſtant religion been promoted in proportion as the proteſtant clergy have been enriched? Have the numbers of the catholic religion diminiſhed according to the views of the legiſlature who doomed their clergy to poverty, and to have no eſtabliſhment at all? The ſtate of the population of the two ſects is ſufficiently well known to prove that the reverſe is the fact; and if you will examine the nature of the eſtabliſhments, you will diſcover which is beſt adapted to the purpoſe of promoting their reſpective religions.—From that abſurd notion of promoting religion, by enriching its clergy, the proteſtant eſtabliſhment has made men of fortune of its clergy; it has made them to live with men of fortune, and to live as men of fortune; it has induced them to live with men of faſhion, with men of pleaſure, and with men of the world; and it has made them to live as men of faſhion——as men of pleaſure——and as men of the world; it has thrown them entirely into that claſs of men whoſe education, whoſe high ſenſe of honour, and whoſe reſpect for the opinion of an obſervant world, renders the attendance of a miniſter of religion almoſt unneceſſary; but it has taken them from the dull, but uſeful, rounds of parochial duties—it has eſtranged them from cultivating a friendly and intimate acquaintance with the lower claſſes of the people—whoſe want of education, whoſe want of a ſenſe of honour—and whoſe ignorance of moral obli-

gation—makes the conſtant and friendly attendance of a miniſter of religion indiſpenſably neceſſary to keep them from falling into irreligion—and to keep them from that vice and debauchery which, unſupported by any fund than that of their labour and their induſtry, which it would ſhortly conſume, muſt make them bad ſubjects under any government, muſt lead to pilfering and puniſhment, perhaps to robbery and murder, and to a digracefull death. —By this eſtabliſhment you have raiſed exceſſive hopes of preferment in the minds of the clergy, from the inequalities it has left in the proviſions which it makes for them, by which their characters have been ſubjected to the imputation of cringings, and ſervility to the diſpenſers of patronage, to the meanly ſacrificing their civil and political rights and opinions upon the altar of an earthly ſuperior, by which they appear, in the eyes of the people, as men either diſregarding or diſbelieving that leading and eſſential tenet of the chriſtian religion, which forbids the ſacrifice of their duty to their worldly promotion.—Injurious as theſe defects in this eſtabliſhment, for which ſuch fears are entertained, have proved to your religion, they almoſt vaniſh when I come to conſider the evils which ariſe from the mode of payment which it allots its clergy.— I ſhould not dwell on how deſtructive this part of the eſtabliſhment has proved to the agriculture of your country, the moſt important branch of induſtry in which your people can be employed; I ſhall confine myſelf to ſtate, that it has ſown the ſeeds of eternal rancour, animoſity, and litigation, between the miniſter and his pariſhioners; it has allied the miniſter of the meek and charitable religion of Chriſt with the very dregs of the earth; it has made him one in a company with valuators, with proctors, with proceſs ſervers, and with civil bill attornies; it has made him the principal ſuitor in that hell upon earth the civil bill court, where perjury is all prevalent; it has converted the miniſter of the diſintereſted religion of Chriſt into a tithe-ſetting auctioneer, diſtributing his liquors, in order to intoxicate his bidders, that they may vie with one another for the purchaſe of his wares; it has made them appear the moſt avaricious, and the greateſt perſecutors, who, by the tenets of the religion it is their duty to inculcate, ſhould be the moſt diſintereſted, and leaſt worldly; it has made it appear to the world as if this eſtabliſhment was inſtituted to make the people ſenſible of their indigence, by a compariſon with the wealth of their clergy; to make them ſenſible of their own wants, by a compariſon with the abundance in the hands of their clergy; to make them ſenſible how miſerably their hard labour was rewarded by a compariſon with the indolence, but immenſe and ſudden fortunes of their clergy: It has made it appear to the world, as if their eſtabliſhment was for no other purpoſe inſtituted in this country, than to provide exorbitantly for the families and connexions of the political jobbers, and political advocates for the conſtitution, in church and ſtate, in its preſent limited condition—and it has made it appear to the world, as if *your proteſtant religion* had no other buſineſs in your country than to ſupport this eſtabliſhment, and not the eſtabliſhment to ſupport

the religion. Turn your eyes to that eſtabliſhment which you have forced on the catholic religion, with a view to its abolition: you have not enabled its clergy to mock the ſimplicity of the Chriſtian religion by the ſplendour of their equipage, by the magnificence of their palaces, their furniture, or their ſide-boards, by the maſſineſs of their plate, nor by the voluptuouſneſs or luxury of their tables;—you have not tempted them, for you have not enabled them, to deſert their pariſhes and their religious duties, in ſearch of pleaſure at Bath, at London, in your capital, at the water-drinking places, the reſort of the faſhionable. No; you have apportioned their ſalaries to the diſcharge of their duty, and you have called out the ſtrongeſt incitements in man—the procuring a ſubſiſtence, and the hopes of bettering their condition, to ſtimulate them to the moſt active diſcharge of their duty. I am not the advocate for either eſtabliſhment;—for I am as averſe to that eſtabliſhment which, by its enormity, ſets the clergy above the diſcharge of their religious duty, as I am to the eſtabliſhment which, by obliging the clergy to humour the weakneſs, or to encourage the ignorance of his pariſhioners, as the only means of procuring a ſubſiſtence, makes it an office beneath a man of education.

But I cannot but obſerve, you have an example in your country of an eſtabliſhment by which a greater number than thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion are carefully and diligently inſtructed in their religious duties, by a reſident clergy, of the pureſt morals, the moſt decorous manners, and of the greateſt learning, between whom and their pariſhioners the greateſt amity and affection ſubſiſt; and not the fifteenth part as burdenſome to the nation as your proteſtant eſtabliſhment. I am aware that in the eyes of weak and timid men, who ſubſcribe to the doctrine, that reformation is the parent of revolution, I ſhall appear as one who has entered on a delicate ſubject with too much freedom; as a dangerous man, as a Jacobin, as one that would embrue my hands in the blood of my countrymen.—But I will appeal from ſuch contemptible deciſion to the ſounder judgment of thoſe who ſubſcribe to the ſafer doctrine, that abuſes are the parent of revolution—and that a timely and rational reform of thoſe abuſes, as well in church and ſtate, are the only ſecurity againſt thoſe convulſions, which ſhake ſociety to its foundation.—In the eyes of theſe men I ſhall, I truſt, appear as one braving the calumny of a great corporation in the diſcharge of my duty—an eye witneſs to the horrors of a revolution in another country, I muſt be more than monſter to wiſh to ſee them raging in my own.—But if ever there was a time when it behoved men in public ſtation to be explicit;—if ever there was a time when thoſe ſcourges of the human race called politicians ſhould lay aſide their duplicity and their fineſſe, it is the preſent moment.—Be aſſured the people of this country will no longer bear that their welfare ſhould be made the ſport of a few family factions; be aſſured they are convinced their true intereſt conſiſts in putting down men of ſelf-creation, who have no object in view but that of aggrandizing themſelves and their families, at the expence of the public—in ſetting up men who ſhall repreſent the

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nation, who ſhall be accountable to the nation, and who ſhall do the buſineſs of the nation; and if I could bring my mind to ſuſpect that my catholic countrymen, after they had been embodied on the conſtitution, amidſt their proteſtant and preſbyterian fellow-citizens, would baſely deſert the common cauſe of our general freedom, I ſhould conceive that, in having been the advocate of their emancipation, I had been the advocate of their diſgrace.——But honour, intereſt, and the riſing ſpirit of the nation, forbid ſuch unworthy ſuſpicions.——If I was to judge by the dead ſilence with which this is received, I ſhould ſuſpect what I have ſaid was not very palatable to ſome men in the houſe; but I have not riſked connections endeared to me by every tie of blood and friendſhip, to ſupport one ſet of men in preference to another: I have hazarded too much to allow the breath of calumny to taint the object I have had in view from the part I have taken. —Immutable principles, on which the happineſs and liberty of my countrymen depend, convey to my mind, the only ſubſtantial boon for which great ſacrifices ſhould be made.—I might allay the fears of the proteſtant monopoliſts for what, in the true ſpirit of political bigotry, they call their proteſtant aſcendancy, by ſtating, that as the boroughs continue in the hands of the preſent proteſtant proprietors, centuries muſt paſs away before the catholics can participate, in any conſiderable portion, of the political power of their country.—I am contending for the purity of the conſtitution, not for its abuſes. I diſclaim contending for catholic freedom, in the hope that the grant may be a dead letter; I diſclaim contending for catholic freedom, in the hope that the rights and liberties of my country may continue to be monopolized the ſame manner after their emancipation they were before.—*But I here avow myſelf the zealous and earneſt advocate for the moſt unqualified emancipation of my catholic countrymen, in the hope and conviction that the monopoly of the rights and liberties of my country, which has hitherto effectually withſtood the efforts of a part of the people, muſt yield to the unanimous will, to the decided intereſt, and to the general effort of a whole united people*; it is from this conviction, and it is for that tranſcendantly important object, that (while the noble lord and right hon. ſec. are offering to riſk their lives and fortunes in ſupport of a ſyſtem that militates againſt the liberty of my countrymen,) I will riſk every thing dear to me on earth; it is for this great object I have I fear more than riſked connections dearer to me than itſelf; but he muſt be a ſpiritleſs man, and we muſt be a ſpiritleſs nation, if we do not reſent the baſeneſs of a Britiſh miniſter, who has raiſed our hopes in order to ſeduce a rival to ſhare with him the diſgrace of this accurſed political cruſade, and blaſts them after, that he may degrade a competitor, to the ſtation of a dependant, and that he may deſtroy friendſhip his nature never knew; he has ſported with the feelings of a whole nation, raiſing the cup with one hand to the parched lip of expectancy, he has daſhed it to the earth with the other, in all the wantonneſs of inſult, and with all the aggravation of contempt. Does he imagine that the people of this country, after he has tantalized them with the cheering hope

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of preſent alleviation and of future proſperity, will tamely bear to be forced to a re-endurance of their former ſufferings, and to a re-appointment of their former ſpoilers; does he, from confidence of long ſucceſs in debauching the human mind, exact from you, calling yourſelves repreſentatives of the people of Ireland, to reject a bill, which has received the unanimous conſent of your conſtituents; or does he mean to puzzle the verſatile diſpoſition of this houſe, on which he has made ſo many ſucceſsful experiments already, by diſtracting you between obedience to his imperious mandates, and obedience to the will of the people you ſhould repreſent; or does he flatter himſelf that becauſe he has ſucceeded in betraying his own country into exchanging that peace, by which ſhe may have retrieved her ſhattered finances, for a war, in which he has ſquandered twenty times a greater treaſure in the courſe of two years, than he, with all his famed œconomy, could ſave in the courſe of ten—for a war in which the flower of the youth of the world have been offered up the victims to his ambition and his ſchemes, as boundleſs and preſumptuous as ill concerted and ill combined, for a war in which the plains of every nation in Europe have been crimſoned with oceans of blood—for a war in which his country has reaped nothing but diſgrace, and which muſt ultimately prove her ruin? Does he flatter himſelf, that he will be enabled, Satan like, to end his political career, by involving the whole empire in a civil war, from which nothing can accrue but a doleful and barren conqueſt to the victor? I truſt the people of England are too wiſe and too juſt to attempt to force meaſures upon us, they would reject with diſdain themſelves; I truſt they have not ſo ſoon forgotten the leſſon they ſo recently learned from America, which ſhould ſerve as a laſting example to nations, againſt employing force to ſubdue the ſpirit of a people *determined to be free;* but if they ſhould be ſo weak or ſo wicked as to ſuffer themſelves to be ſeduced by a man, to whoſe ſoul duplicity and fineſſe is as congenial, as ingenuouſneſs and fair dealing is a ſtranger, to become the inſtruments of ſupporting *a few odious public characters in power and rapacity againſt the intereſt and againſt the ſenſe of a whole people*—if we are to be dragooned into meaſures againſt our will, by a nation that would loſe her laſt life and expend her laſt guinea in reſenting a ſimilar inſult if offered to herſelf—I truſt in God ſhe will find in the people of this country a ſpirit, in no wiſe inferior to her own.—You are at this moment at the moſt awful period of your lives: the miniſter of England has committed you with your country, and on this night your *adoption or rejection of this bill muſt determine in the eyes of the Iriſh nation, which you repreſent, the miniſter of England, or the people of Ireland:* and although you are convinced you do not repreſent the people of Ireland—although you are convinced every man of you, that you are ſelf-created, it does not alter the nature of the conteſt, it is ſtill a conteſt between the miniſter of England and the people of Ireland; and *the weakneſs of your title ſhould only make you the more circumſpect* in the *exerciſe of your power*—obey the Britiſh miniſter—diſregard the voice of the people. France muſt have loſt her ſenſes

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if ſhe heſitates what part ſhe will take; it is not an eighty-fourth department you will have moulded to *her* wiſhes; it is not ſimply a La Vendee you will have kindled in the boſom of *your* country. —For if you ſhall have once convinced the people of this country that you are *traitors to them, and hirelings to the miniſter of an avaricious domineering nation*—under the outward appearance of a ſiſter country;—if you ſhall have convinced the people of this country, that the free national conſtitution, for which they were committed, and for which they riſked every thing dear to them in 1782, has been deſtroyed by the bribery of a Britiſh miniſter, and the unexampled venality of an Iriſh parliament;—if you ſhall have convinced them, that inſtead of riſing or falling with England, they are never to riſe, but when ſhe has been humbled by adverſity, and that they muſt fall when ſhe becomes elated by proſperity;—if you ſhall have convinced the people of this country that inſtead of reciprocal advantage, nothing is to be reaped from their connexion with England, but ſupremacy and aggrandizement on the one ſide, and a coſtly venality, injury, inſult, degradation, and poverty on the other—it is human nature that you ſhall have driven the people of this country to court the alliance of any nation, able and willing to break the chains of a bondage not more galling to their feelings than *reſtrictive of their proſperity*.——The gentlemen at the oppoſite ſide of the houſe have attempted to influence you by the mention of Jackſon—ſo will I—Read the correſpondence of that traitor with your enemy, and you will find a volume of inſtruction in every line that he has written.—If the people of this country do enjoy the conſtitution in church and ſtate—why has that traitor found the people of the one country free from that oppreſſion which goads nations into all the horrors of revolution?—Why has he found the people of the other ſo highly ſublimate to his purpoſe? —Examine the whole of his intelligence and you will find the weakneſs of your country in the conduct you have purſued, and in the converſe of that conduct only you can eſtabliſh her ſtrength.— Do not depend on the bayonet for the ſupport of your meaſures; believe me that in proportion as your meaſures require force to ſupport them, in an exact proportion are they radically and miſchievouſly bad; believe me there is more ſtrength in the affections and confidence of the people, than if you were to convert every ſecond houſe in the nation into barracks for your ſoldiery; and when the gentlemen [Mr. Cuffe and Ld. Kingſborough] whom I have heard this night tell you, that to act in contempt of the public opinion, is ſpirit and firmneſs, and that to act with a decent reſpect for that opinion, is timidity and cowardice—they make the character of the legiſlator to merge into the character of the duelliſt, and they ſet you upon ſplitting points of honour with your conſtituents; is it not enough that you live in the age, and in midſt of the horrors of revolution, to deter you from acting in contempt of the public opinion? Have you not had examples enough to convince you, that men, in throwing off the ruſſet frock for the uniform of the ſoldier, do not at all times, throw away the ties of kindred and of blood?

blood? Have you not had examples enough to convince you, that even ſoldiers cannot at all times be brought to ſhed the blood of their parents, their kindred, and their friends? And have you not had a great and memorable example to convince you that the ſoldiers of an odious government may become the ſoldiers of the nation? If theſe are plain truths, this is the time to tell them; if I ſpeak daggers to you, it is that neither you nor my country may ever feel them; *but if you wiſh to be deceived—hearken to thoſe men who are intereſted in riſking every thing, that they may continue to monopolize the whole political power of your country;---hearken to thoſe men who are intereſted in riſking every thing that may continue to draw their better inheritance from the ſale of the welfare of your country;*---but let me caution you, whoſe property is too conſiderable to be hazarded in the baſe purſuit, after the rights and property of your enſlaved and impoveriſhed countrymen, to take care what part you act on this night; let me caution you that the deciſion of this night goes much farther than even the important bill under your conſideration. You, none of you, can be ignorant that the Britiſh miniſter has deſigns in procraſtinating this queſtion—that he may gain advantages for his own country, at the expence of yours, greater than ſhe was capable of receiving '*ſince the revolution, at leaſt ſince the union;*' and ſo ſtrongly impreſſed is this on the public mind, that you who ſhall on this night vote for the rejection of this bill, will appear in the eyes of the Iriſh nation, not only as men voting in obedience to the Britiſh miniſter againſt the voice of the people, but as men voting for an *union with England*, by which this country is to be everlaſtingly reduced to the ſtate of an abject province;—fortunately the views of the Britiſh miniſter have been detected; fortunately the people of this country ſee him in his true colours, like the deſperate gameſter who has loſt his all in the wideſt ſchemes of aggrandizement, he looks round for ſome dupe, to ſupply him with the further means of future projects, and in the crafty ſubtleneſs of his ſoul, he fondly imagines he has found that eaſy dupe in the credulity of the Iriſh nation; after he has exhauſted his own country in a cruſade againſt the phantom of political opinion, he flatters himſelf he will be enabled to reſuſcitate her at the expence of yours.

As you value the peace and happineſs of your country;—as you value the rights and liberties of that ſoil that has given you birth;—and, if you are not loſt to every ſenſe of feeling for your own conſequence and importance as men, I call on you on this night to make your ſtand; I call on you to rally round the independence of your country, whoſe exiſtence has been ſo artfully aſſailed—Believe me the Britiſh miniſter will leave you in the lurch, when he ſees that the people of this nation are *too much in earneſt* to be tricked out of their rights, or the independence of their country; after he ſees that they have been ſufficiently alarmed at ſeeing the ſame men who uniformly oppoſed the independence of their country, when it was a queſtion in this houſe in the year 1782, recalled into power, when that independence was to be attacked in 1795; when he has gained his

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ends of you, and when he has made you the inſtruments by which he ſhall have ſo divided and diſgraced the oppoſition of England, as to render it impoſſible to form an efficient government out of his opponents, he will make his peace with your country by conceding this meaſure, leaving you—"fixed figures for the hand of ſcorn to point its ſlow and moving finger at."—Good God! that you ſhould fall into that very error which has ſo recently overwhelmed a great nation in ſuch unheard-of calamities!—Will you not take warning from the fate of the government of France, which by not adapting its conduct to the changes of the public mind, has brought ruin on itſelf, and deſtruction on its country? What a diſplay of legiſlation have we had on this night—artificers who neither know the foundation on which they work—the inſtruments they ought to uſe—nor the materials they ought to form!—Is it on the narrow baſis of monopoly and excluſion you would erect a temple to the growing liberty of your country?—Is it by foreign troops you would lead the ardent ſpirit of your countrymen? Is it in the fuſty records of barbarous ages you would ſeek for that exiſtent mind to which you ſhould adopt your laws? If you will legiſlate, know, that on the broad baſis of immutable juſtice only, you can raiſe a laſting beauteous temple to the liberty of your iſland, whoſe ample baſe ſhall lodge, and whoſe roof ſhall ſhelter her united family from the rankling inclemency of rejection and excluſion.—Know that reaſon is that ſilken thread by which the lawgiver leads his people; and, above all, know, that in the knowledge of the temper of the public mind, conſiſts the ſkill and the wiſdom of the legiſlator. Do not imagine that the mind of your countrymen has been ſtationary, while that of all Europe has been ſo rapidly progreſſive, for you muſt be blind not to perceive that the whole European mind has undergone a revolution, neither confined to this, nor to that country, but as general as the great cauſes which have given it birth, and ſtill continue to feed its growth. In vain do thoſe men, who ſubſiſt but on the abuſes of the government under which they live, flatter themſelves, that what we have ſeen theſe laſt ſix years, is but the fever of the moment, which will paſs away as ſoon as the patient has been let blood enough; as well may they attempt to alter the courſe of nature, without altering her laws: if they would effect a counter-revolution in the European mind, they muſt deſtroy commerce and its effects—they muſt aboliſh every trace of the mariner's compaſs——they muſt conſign every book to the flames——they muſt obliterate every veſtige of the invention of the preſs, and they muſt deſtroy the conduit of intelligence, by deſtroying the inſtitution of the poſt-office; then, and not until then, they, and their abuſes may live on, in all the ſecurity which ignorance, ſuperſtition, and want of concert in the people can beſtow.——But while I would overwhelm with deſpair thoſe men who have been nurſed in the lap of venality and proſtitution;—who have been educated in contempt and ridicule of a love for their country, and who have grown grey in ſcoffing at every thing like public ſpirit—let me congratulate every true friend to mankind, that *commerce*, which has begat ſo much independence,

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will continue to beget more; and let me congratulate every friend to the human ſpecies, that the *preſs*, which has ſent ſuch a maſs of information into the world, will continue, with accelerated rapidity, to pour forth its treaſures, ſo beneficial to mankind. It is to theſe great cauſes we are indebted, that the combination of *prieſts and deſpots*, which ſo long tyrannized over the civil and political liberty of Europe—*has been diſſolved*—it is to theſe great cauſes we are indebted, that no prieſt, be his religion what it may, dare preach the doctrine; and that no man believes the doctrine which inculcates the neceſſity of ſacrificing every right and every bleſſing this world can afford, as the only means of attaining eternal happineſs in the life to come.

This was the doctrine by which the deſpotiſm of Europe was ſo long ſupported; this was the doctrine by which the political popery of Europe was ſupported; but the doctrine and the deſpotiſm may now ſleep in the ſame grave, until the trumpet of ignorance, ſuperſtition, and bigotry, ſhall ſound their reſurrection!—Thanks be to God, the European mind demands more ſubſtantial food than the airy nothing of metaphyſical belief;—thanks be to God, the abſurdity of one ſet of men framing *opinions* for other men to *believe*, upon a ſubject which neither have faculties to *underſtand*, has been exploded; and that every heart, and every mind, is anxiouſly engaged in perfecting a civil and political code, which, as it is within the ſcope, ſo it is the moſt important concern to every nation on the globe; and ſo far from believing they would earn Heaven by a baſe dereliction of their rights, they are firmly convinced, that in promoting the true, civil, and political rights of man, they are advancing human ſociety to that ſtate of perfection it was the deſign of the Creator it ſhould attain, convinced that the *cauſe of Freedom is the cauſe of God*.

Mr. BARRINGTON roſe, he ſaid, to defend the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment of Ireland; and convinced as he was that the adoption of Catholic claims muſt be fatal to Proteſtant government, he would not heſitate to give the bill, however plauſible and popular, his moſt ſtrenuous oppoſition; but he wiſhed not to have his principles miſconſtrued or miſunderſtood; he wiſhed not to embelliſh the ſhrine of Proteſtant freedom with the ſpoils of Catholic liberty—to tear away the rights of the Diſſenter, in order to grace the trophy of the Reformiſt—or for an inſtant ſuſpend the liberty of the one, to gratify the ambition of the other: theſe were not his principles; but invariably attached to the principles of the glorious Revolution—a limited Monarchy and Proteſtant hereditary ſucceſſion; and determined to ſupport thoſe principles in their purity and extent, he would willingly give unqualified toleration to every religious ſect, but would limit every political aſſociation. He wiſhed concluſively to define the political rights of the Iriſh Catholic, and finally to aſcertain and ſeat his claims and his authority *within the pale of liberty, but without the circle of legiſlation.* But whilſt the Catholic principle avows a foreign ſupremacy within this realm, and whilſt the Catholic conſiders as a grievance, and refuſes to adopt

adopt thoſe obligations through which the loyal Proteſtant conveys his allegiance to the foot of his monarch, whilſt he renders his ſect, rather the characteriſtic of his politics than of his religion, the Iriſh Catholic cannot be truſted with political power; he muſt relinquiſh the ſhackles of foreign ſubjection for the ties of domeſtic obedience, before he can ſafely be ſuffered to participate the power of a Proteſtant parliament, or we can ſafely ſurrender the aſcendancy of a Proteſtant legiſlature. The religion of the Catholic forms them into a great and diſtinct political aſſociation:—by their former practice and their preſent principles, equally unadapted to give ſtability to our conſtitution, or be entruſted with the power of the country: formerly the ſlaves and bigots of unreſtrained monarchy and monkiſh government, now the open and zealous partizans of foreign principles and undefined democracy. When we reflect that this principle of foreign eccleſiaſtical ſupremacy has ever been their cloak or their apology for temporal turbulence; and having, in ſubjection, perpetually attempted the ruin of Britiſh connexion——become tyrants when they thought they had accompliſhed their purpoſe———ſhall the Proteſtant coolly and with open eyes ſurrender that power for which he has ſo often ſtruggled? Can the parliament of Ireland, an apoſtate from its avowed principles and its duty to a Proteſtant crown, fooliſhly aſſign its authority and aſcendancy in the State to the hands of Catholic agitators, that it may afterwards have the humble gratification of ſuing their bounty for a permiſſive participation of the very ſame rights and very ſame powers which our miſtaken generoſity had juſt induced us to relinquiſh? 'Tis vain to ſay that the intereſt of the Catholic and the Proteſtant can ever incorporate—the Catholic compoſed of three millions, the Proteſtant of one: Proteſtant power, and Proteſtant property, can alone balance Catholic population; and if the Proteſtant participates his political power with the Catholic, three-fourths of the power united with three-fourths of the population, will ſoon be ſtrong enough to claim and reaſſume nine-tenths of the property. If the Catholic poſſeſſes the power, will it be his intereſt to ſuffer that property to remain in the hands of the Proteſtant—a property which they only conſider as veſted by the tyranny of forfeiture—and to which they have never failed to keep alive perpetual claims?—No: The temptation would be too great, and the power too ſtrong to be reſiſted. Why did the Catholics in 1791 procure a map of the old forfeitures, to be made by a ſubſcription among themſelves? Was it for the purpoſe of gratifying their reflection with what they had loſt? or pleaſing their imagination with the idea of what they might regain? A regular ſyſtem has been formed, and has as yet been ſtrictly and too ſucceſsfully purſued by their advocates; they have the power of voting for members of the legiſlature; they enjoy all the freedom and all the liberty of the Proteſtants; but now their object is the power and the property, and this bill is framed, openly and admirably framed to give them both. The bill gives them, amongſt many other ſituations, ſeats in parliament—a

Papiſt

Papiſt chancellor and Papiſt judges—Papiſt generals and Papiſt privy counſellors—and, amongſt the reſt, a Papiſt judge of the eccleſiaſtical court :—And muſt we not conclude, that when the Catholics gain that power, they will uſe every effort to graſp the extent of its exerciſe? Being poſſeſſed already of the elective franchiſe, the right of repreſentation muſt give them a decided aſcendancy in the Commons; in counties the number of Catholic electors will be able to turn the majority of votes in their favour; the power of their landlords will be defeated by the repreſentation of prieſts, or if that fails, by the influence of the Catholic aſſociations, which will ſpring up and be formed in every part of Ireland; teſts will be publiſhed; their chapels will be turned into huſtings, and their maſs into a canvaſs; their numbers and their principles will ſoon overturn the power of the Proteſtant county gentlemen; the tenant will merge in the partizan and enthuſiaſt, and the greater number of county repreſentatives will be returned by the Catholic voters, who will naturally chooſe only ſuch men as will forward the views and intereſt of their party. How will the Proteſtant gentleman then, (who now meanly turns to the views of the Catholic leaſt he ſhould loſe his county influence) repent his folly, in allowing the Catholic claims, when he finds that, inſtead of ſtrengthening, it muſt deſtroy their intereſt? The Catholic fluſhed at gaining, and the Proteſtant irritated at loſing influence, inſtead of producing peace and harmony, elections will be carried on with the utmoſt rancour of party, and inſtead of uniting, will effectually diſunite the ſects, and for ever ſever their intereſt. In cities the event will be as certain, but more dangerous; Papiſt mobs will be hired to determine and govern the elections: Open boroughs will be in a ſimilar ſituation; and cloſe boroughs, in the hands of Proteſtants, will then ſeem to be the only bulwark to preſerve the relicks of Proteſtant power; but inſtead of preſerving that power, they will only operate as a freſh ſource of Catholic ambition. We know how ſeats in theſe boroughs, nay, the very boroughs, are to be procured. Will the Catholics fail to proceed in the certain mode of poſſeſſing both; ſubſcriptions will run through the country by the Catholics, to aſſiſt in procuring the full advantages of their power, and if they can out-number in the counties, bully in the towns, and bribe in the boroughs, the parliament will be their own—and how long will the *Conſtitution be ours?* An Hon. Bart. (Sir L. Parſons) has ſaid, he is proud to acknowledge and retract his principles advanced in the year 1793, when he oppoſed the grant of elective franchiſe to the Catholics; but though a man may deſert his principles, he cannot deſert his arguments; and the arguments of the Hon. Baronet at that period, when ſpeaking againſt the Catholics, are too ſtrong and forcible to be paſſed over (Here Mr. B. read Sir L. Parſons' ſpeech in the year 1793, wherein he uſed the moſt able arguments againſt the Catholic meaſures). When the Catholics gain the power of the parliament what will be their firſt objects? a parliamentary reform, that is a radical change of repreſentation on the moſt levelling principles: whilſt Catholics poſſeſs

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the population, and not the property, they will naturally adopt their projected ſyſtem of reform upon that principle, and adopt that ſpecies of reform which will gain weight and influence to the population, and not to the property. Look to the plans of reform, publiſhed in fact by the Catholics themſelves in the year 1793. The Society of United Iriſhmen, which has expired on the bed of public contempt and execration, had originally formed on the pretended principle of what they called Catholic Emancipation, and had latterly been compoſed moſtly of Catholics themſelves, entering into reſolutions and publiſhing eſſays for their own body and their own purpoſes. Under that impreſſion they publiſhed to the nation their plan of reform, grounded upon the baſis of perſonal repreſentation, annual parliaments and no qualification. [Here Mr. Barrington read the printed plan of parliamentary reform, publiſhed by the United Iriſhmen in 1793]. Has the caſe altered ſince 1793? Muſt it not be ſuppoſed that the ſame plan of reform adopted in that year continues the favourite ſyſtem of the Catholic in 1795? And that the moment they get the power, will they not purſue that principle? Will it not be their obvious intereſt to ouſt the property of the country from parliament, and to introduce thoſe who having none of their own will be the more readily induced to aſſiſt in reclaiming and reaſſuming the forfeited eſtates, and veſting the whole dominion of the country in their Catholic brethren? It is a folly to ſay that any obſolete ties or trite obligations could for a moment prevent the views of a party fluſhed with power and heated by ſucceſs. The landed intereſt of Ireland then will no more repreſent it; the very loweſt wretches in the country will mutually elect and repreſent each other; the moſt violent democrats of the country will compoſe the parliament; and when a parliament ſo compoſed gets the civil power, will it acquieſce in the preſent eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment? certainly not. The ſame principle which led them to ſeek civil, would alſo lead them to eſtabliſh eccleſiaſtical power on their own principle; they would then rationally argue that their laity being on the ſame footing as the Proteſtants, ſo ſhould their clergy; and what power could then prevent them? The parliament their own, the people their own, and the property their own, they would either participate or aboliſh the Proteſtant Hierarchy. The Commons, the Lords, the church and the ſtate, muſt yield to the power of the Catholics; and how long would they then ſupport a *Proteſtant King?* It cannot be denied that the old and obſolete claims to the forfeited eſtates would naturally be ſought by the deſcendants of the old proprietors; and the preſent bill is in the next inſtance peculiarly adapted to carry theſe claims into full and complete effect, by the appointment of Papiſt judges, a Papiſt chancellor, and a Papiſt eccleſiaſtical judge. The office of chancellor poſſeſſes great power and authority; the keeper of the King's ſeal, with a power to cancel the King's patents: the patron of many benefices and offices; the viſitor of all Proteſtant ſeminaries and public inſtitutions; 'tis he who appoints all the magiſtrates in the kingdom, and is guardian of all Proteſtant minors, and is termed the

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keeper of the King's conſcience, united with the power of his equitable juriſdiction, and the extreme conſequence annexed to his office; yet this office, under a Proteſtant government, is to be committed to the hands of a Catholic. The chief juſtice of the King's bench has juriſdiction over all inferior courts in the kingdom, and can curb, puniſh or direct all the magiſtrates of Ireland; he has power over all the Proteſtant corporations, and poſſeſſes the chief criminal juriſdiction; high treaſon and offences againſt the ſtate are peculiarly cognizable in this court, yet this alſo is to be placed in the hands of a Catholic.

The chief juſtice of the Common Pleas has a juriſdiction peculiarly adapted to the inveſtigation and re-aſſumption, and of obſolete claims; the writ of right is under his juriſdiction, and pleas of real property are in his court particularly cognizable; and this office is alſo to be handed to a Catholic.

The Barons of the Exchequer audit all the accounts of the eſtabliſhment, and their court now poſſeſſes in matters of property, great, legal and equitable juriſdiction: yet, theſe offices, and every other office in the ſtate, are all by this bill adapted (it might be well ſaid appropriated) to Catholics; becauſe, if Catholics were not intended to be placed in theſe offices, why include them in the bill, and give them ſpecificially the power? And if they are, can it be denied that all Proteſtant power muſt end in the country?—Out of our great liberality we ſhall change places with the Catholic, ſave that the paucity of our numbers will for ever effectually prevent our re-aſſuming our power or our conſequence in the nation: the Catholics know it, and they preſs it. By poſſeſſing the power of the parliament, the Catholics will alſo poſſeſs a total controul over the ſtate. The ſupplies are the ſinews of the executive power, without which, its authority and prerogative are but names; by ſtopping or ſuſpending theſe ſupplies, the Catholics will have the power to do any thing they pleaſe in this country; or may, by their ſyſtem of ſhort money-bills, when they think proper, put the crown in leading-ſtrings; by having the power of the ſupplies, they may new-model or diſband the army at their diſcretion; they may totally diſſolve the civil eſtabliſhment; and if the crown refuſes to appoint Catholic judges, or ſtate officers, by having the power of the ſupplies, they may either compel him to do as they wiſh, or relinquiſh the government of Ireland, which in ſuch hands as theirs, would rather weaken than ſtrengthen the empire of Great Britain:—perhaps that may be their object.

Mr. Barrington animadverted ſeverely on the language of Mr. O'Connor, and reprobated his principles and doctrine as the moſt dangerous and unconſtitutional that any man had ever ventured to broach in parliament. The Hon. Member (Mr. O'Connor) had ſaid, "that the army of the crown would be converted to a national army;" ſuch language only befitted the meridian of a French convention, from whom the gentleman ſeemed to have copied both his language and his principles, equally inconſiſtent with the happineſs of the people, and the ſafety of the conſtitution; he preached

preached a doctrine founded upon tenets the enemy of both, and in the glare of popular declamation, concealed the principle of unqualified democracy!—[Mr. O'Connor roſe to explain.—Mr. Barrington replied.] He then adverted to the language of ſome gentlemen, and the inconſiſtency of an Hon. Baronet (Sir Hercules Langriſhe) who, a favoured ſervant of the crown, had riſen from the treaſury bench, and ſpoke equally againſt the rights and intereſts of his benefactors, and againſt his own avowed principles expreſſed in his ſpeeches in the year 1792 and 1793. Mr. Barrington ſaid, that ſymptoms of conſtitutional apoſtacy and avowed inconſiſtence were too much for one night, and read an old prophecy of one St. Lazarianus, recited in Leland's hiſtory of Ireland, which he applied to the honourable Baronet.—Mr. Barrington then went into an argument to ſhew that the modern Catholic doctrine of an Iriſh cabinet, diſtinct entirely from that of Great Britain, was unconſtitutional and utterly impracticable; and drew the concluſion, that none but thoſe who intended a ſeparation of the country could argue upon that principle. Ireland, he ſaid, is certainly a free kingdom, annexed to the crown though not to the realm of Great Britain; the cabinet is a council annexed to, or rather an emanation from the crown of the empire; and as the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is the deputy and not the partner of the crown, ſo two diſtinct cabinets, one in England, and one in Ireland, counteracting each other, muſt argue two diſtinct executive powers, which is utterly incompatible with the principle of conſtitutional connection between the two countries: the cabinet of Ireland muſt neceſſarily have a partial and local authority; but in matters which affect the empire generally, the cabinet of Great Britain, as immediately attaching to the crown of the empire, and deriving its exiſtence from the crown, is competent to deliberate and adviſe on every meaſure affecting the conſtitution and general intereſts of the crown and empire; and as he conceived the acts of ſettlement and recognition, and the king's coronation oath, (which could not be partially diſpenſed with by an act of the Iriſh legiſlature) precluded the crown conſiſtent with the ſtipulations under which the monarch received and held the ſceptre of the empire, to diſpenſe with that oath, ſo a queſtion affecting the empire generally, and relinquiſhing the very vital principles of the revolution under which the crown graſped its ſceptre, and the people their liberties and their religion, was properly an object of conſideration in the Britiſh cabinet. To evince the diſpoſition of the Catholics on that head, Mr. Barrington read the proceedings of the Catholic meeting of St. Catharine's pariſh in April laſt, where Doctor Sherlock, a Popiſh prieſt preſided; theſe reſolutions, amongſt other things reſolved, "*That the uſurped* "*interference of the Britiſh cabinet in the legiſlation of this kingdom,* "*was a new inſult upon the ſovereignty of free and independent Ire-*"*land.*" Mr. Barrington then adverted to ſeveral ſimilar publications, and contended that any ſect, religious or political, avowing theſe principles, were not to be truſted with the guardianſhip of a country which they obviouſly wiſhed to detach from its deareſt

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and moſt natural connection. After many arguments on that head, Mr. Barrington proceeded to argue that the late conduct and ſuſpicious principles of the Catholic leaders, rendered them unworthy of any conceſſion from the legiſlature.—Three counties in Ireland were now ſaid to be in a ſtate of inſurrection. Is it the proteſtants, who raiſed theſe inſurrections; or were they papiſts, induced by the influence of Catholic aſſociations and Catholic manifeſtos, to riſe in defiance of the law, and attempt to coerce the parliament? Lord Fitzwilliam, in his celebrated letter, had ſaid, "that nothing "but arms could keep down the ſpirit of the Catholics." That was a ſad recommendation for favour to the legiſlature of the country.—Men with arms in their hands call upon the Parliament to concede to their claim, and whilſt they acted in rebellion, their advocates had the preſumption to declaim upon their loyalty. The parliament was called upon to give power to the moſt diſaffected men in Ireland; a certain ſet of Catholics, in the middle rank, who duped the better and inflamed the lower ranks of the people —men who profeſs the Catholic, but practice no religion; who have ſome money, but no education; ſome talents, but no principle; much ambition and little judgment; they have ruined by their precipitation what they planned by intrigue, and uniting their principle and their practice, have evinced themſelves equally unadapted to govern, and unwilling to be governed. This bill, fraudulently called by its ſupporters *emancipation*, in no ſhape or way ſerved or affected the lower claſs of Catholics: it gave them no ſort of benefit, or in any way whatſoever applies to them; it leſſens not their rents or their tythes; it takes no burthen from them to place it on the rich; it is neither a relief to their wants or a ſpur to their induſtry; but the country was to be committed merely and ſolely to give power to a ſet of men who only wiſh to monopolize its offices and its revenue, namely, a few of the middle claſs of Catholics: and can theſe men be truſted? Mr. Tone, who had been implicated in the treaſons of Jackſon, had been alſo at the very moment of theſe treaſons, ſecretary to the Catholic committee; ſo late as April laſt, he has been publicly thanked by them for his zeal and activity in their ſervice; but could he be guilty as the ſecretary to the United Iriſhmen, and innocent as ſecretary to the Catholic aſſociation? They were the ſame perſons under different titles. Treaſon has been proved on the one, and ſuſpicion implicated the other. Lewins, who is alſo implicated with the treaſons of Jackſon, is alſo nephew to another of the Catholic Aſſociation, a leading character, a man who preſumed to preſide at the Kildare meeting when they reſolved, "*That the removal of their beloved* "*Viceroy would tend to the diſmemberment of the empire.*" Subſcriptions have been opened at the Garter tavern under pretext of promoting their emancipation, and in one ſitting a thouſand pounds had been ſubſcribed to ſupport this application; and ſimilar ſubſcriptions are now become general through the kingdom. But how are ſubſcriptions to ſupport their application? certainly in one of two ways, either by *corruption*, or *ammunition*. Mr. Barrington here called upon any hon. member in their confidence, to ſatisfy the houſe as to the pur-

poſe of theſe ſubſcriptions; to coerce, libel, or corrupt, was the only principle on which thoſe ſubſcriptions could be applied.—Mr. Barrington then ſaid, that the arguments of hon. members, "that having granted the elective franchiſe, the grants of repreſentation came of courſe, and could not now be denied," was a weak and miſchievous principle of reaſoning, that becauſe we have done wrong we muſt do worſe, and becauſe we gave liberty we muſt give power. If gentlemen argue that the grant of the elective franchiſe was dangerous and deſtructive in the firſt inſtance, the remedy is at hand: repeal that act, and by the repeal reſtore that ſafety to the conſtitution; but never let it be ſaid, that, becauſe we weakened we muſt alſo totally abandon the Proteſtant power in Ireland. The ſupporters of Mr. Knox's motion in 1793, were not bound to ſupport this bill; it goes vaſtly further than the motion, for this goes to every office in the ſtate. Mr. Barrington went into many other arguments, to ſhew the danger of conceſſions, and declared his determination to riſque every thing in ſupport of Britiſh connexion. He ſaid, that, convinced as he was that the Catholic enjoyed freedom and liberty in the fulleſt extent; that they ſought not for emancipation, but power; that they wiſhed not to reform, but to re-capture the country; he could not, conſiſtent with his duty to his king, his country, or himſelf, become the inſtrument of their ſyſtem; and was determined, upon every principle, and to the laſt moment of his life, to ſupport the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment, the juſt rights of the crown, and the union of the empire.—Mr. Barrington concluded by obſerving, that the language of his right hon. friend (Mr. Pelham) did him honour as an Iriſh member of parliament, and ſhould convince this country that his character, his integrity, and his principles in a ſiſter kingdom, did not merge in his official ſituation in this.

The Hon. C. H. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, an Honourable Member concluded his ſpeech, by requeſting the attention of the gentlemen of property to this, as a moſt momentous ſubject;—equally impreſſed with the greatneſs of it, I alſo call upon them, and upon the whole Houſe, to give it the moſt ſerious conſideration. Feeling the importance of the queſtion, I cannot reconcile my mind to give it a ſilent vote, which I hope will be my apology for intruding upon you at ſo late at hour: I ſhall be very ſhort; the ſentiments I profeſs have been invariably held by my family, and ſo frequently expreſſed, as to render repetition almoſt unneceſſary.

Gentlemen have ſaid that they oppoſe this bill becauſe it takes power from the proteſtant, to give it to the catholic: I ſupport it from a thorough conviction that its object is not a transfer of power, but an encreaſe of ſtrength and vigour to the conſtitution, by the union of our people.

Much has been ſaid of the revolution;—I deny it to be a principle of the Britiſh conſtitution, as eſtabliſhed at the revolution, that the majority of the people ſhould be excluded from partaking of the

bleſſings

bleſſings of that conſtitution which would never have exiſted but for them, and to which conſtitution we declare it to be our pride to aſſimilate ours.

You talk of the form of your government;—I tell you the form of no government has the prerogative to be immutable; but I tell you more, you confound the form of your government, as generated by your own abuſes, with its original purity.

I aſſert it to be a firſt principle, that every Iriſhman ought to poſſeſs the capability of partaking of the bleſſing of the conſtitution; of the conſtitution which is ſtrengthened in proportion as he ſupports it. Do I deceive myſelf? Is it rather a conſtitution intended not *for the people*, but for us choſen from amongſt them? A conſtitution not for the many, but for the few? Not for a nation, but for a ſect? the proteſtant ſect—the proteſtant aſcendancy. The aſcendancy of the proteſtant, meaning by that his religion, every proteſtant muſt value, and no one more than myſelf; but if by aſcendancy is meant the monopoly of conſtitutional privileges, periſh aſcendancy!—There is indeed an aſcendancy, which is and ought to be dear to every Iriſhman, the aſcendancy of the nation; this is an aſcendancy which every good citizen ought to revere: national aſcendancy is to aſſociated man as honour to the individual, —invaluable; to be relinquiſhed but with his life; but he who affects to raiſe his religion upon the degradation of his country is an enemy to both, a bad citizen, and an oſtentatious hypocrite.

God forbid I ſhould be conſidered an unprincipled leveller; I ſhould be a ſorry advocate for the cauſe I eſpouſe, did I think of laying the foundation of the future proſperity of my country upon the ruins of religion.—No, Sir, I am as much attached to the proteſtant religion as any Member of this Houſe; but I am thoroughly convinced that the intereſt of that religion does not require the martyrdom of any man. I wiſh for general, unqualified, conſtitutional capacity to my brother Iriſhman, becauſe I feel he ought and does aſpire to it—becauſe I know he merits it—and becauſe I am convinced that upon his obtaining it depends the future proſperity of my country.

Gentlemen on the oppoſite ſide of the Houſe have ſtated, that this queſtion does not concern Ireland alone; it is, Sir, a moſt momentous queſtion, indeed: it is the cauſe of the catholics, it is the cauſe of the proteſtants, it is that of the preſbyterians, of every inhabitant of your land, of the Iriſh nation, of the Britiſh empire.

Sir, the people of this country have been accuſtomed to ſee meaſures of great national utility carried through this Houſe; you have done much for your country; ſhe is, and ought to be grateful; but in the language of a Right Hon. Gentleman, they were "little the acts of relief," compared to the preſent, which comprehends the whole people; we are not debating a queſtion concerning the intereſts of any particular ſet of men, of any ſect or party; we are in the act of this night peculiarly legiſlating for Ireland. Paſs this bill into a law, and you have no man *conſtitutionally degraded*; do

this, and every Iriſhman will act hand in hand with his neighbour; and then, and not till then, ſhall this country, having laid the foundation of certain progreſſive improvement, be at peace at home, and aſſert her place among the nations of the earth.

You talk of the connexion between the two countries,—which connexion no man values more than myſelf; but you have given ſo much to others, that you caanot afford to be juſt yourſelf. You talk of ſtanding by England: what have you to offer her in the hour of her calamity and diſgrace?—The weakneſs of a party, not the ſtrength of a nation.

Will you encourage the ſeparation of your people with the preſumptuous hope that you can *conſtitutionalize diſunion*, and not deſtroy your empire?

I am for uniting the catholic and proteſtant, becauſe the moment calls for coalition; becauſe I am convinced the meaſure will ſtrengthen our country, and protect every thing we value;—and I am for uniting him to us by an equal participation of the conſtitutional privileges, becauſe I conſider this as the ſtrongeſt bond of union, and becauſe I think he is juſtly entitled to it; and I am for reſtoring him now, becauſe a great conſtitutional act, big with conſtitutional benefit, cannot be too ſoon ratified.

Sir, I conſider this queſtion upon the general and obvious ground of uniting our people, and ſhall not, exhauſted as I am, and tired as I perceive the Houſe to be, detain you with my reaſons for agreeing to every particular privilege which this bill confers upon the catholics. I have thoroughly and long ſince convinced my mind, that every ſituation under the conſtitution which he can accept, we ought to grant, becauſe I think him fully entitled, from his property, his talents, and his fidelity.

Mr. OSBORNE. Whatever may be the fate of the queſtion to-night, it muſt have given great ſatisfaction to the friends of the meaſure to have heard the diſcuſſion that has taken place; from which, without much prophetic ſpirit, it may be foretold that however ſome mens minds are ſtill under the influence of prejudice unſubdued, its final completion is not far diſtant. He then ſtated that as the object of the meaſure was conciliation, and the affectionate union of all, he ſhould not heſitate to avow that he ſhould feel leſs regret at the rejection of the meaſure for the preſent, than he ſhould have felt at its ſucceſs, if that ſucceſs was to be conſidered as ariſing from a ſuppoſed neceſſity, and not a ſenſe of right; from the calamitous ſituation of the country involved in war and not its juſtice; or was to be attributed to the zeal of one man, or one ſet of men, and not to the virtue of the parliament. And from obſervations that had fallen in the debate, he found it neceſſary to diſcriminate between the Roman catholic cauſe, as taken up by the body at large, and as preſſed forward by a ſet of men in this town whoſe clamours were ever aſſailing our ears, and who, in affecting to ſpeak the ſentiments of the Roman catholic body, blaſted by their own its hopes, and outraged the feelings of its beſt friends, by connecting

it with the promotion of their own factious views. But, said he, as their sentiments are far different, and more congenial to the spirit of the constitution they seek to participate, he should, as others should also, rescue his mind from the impression first made by the few, who have thrusted themselves into the ostensible management of this great and popular cause, well knowing that in every such cause such men would arise, and would, in every instance, afford an equally strong argument against the wisest or most just measure.

I say, that I am a friend to the complete adoption of the Roman catholic into the bosom of the state, relying first on the great change in the political state of this country, since the system took effect; and that a policy, especially one of such a character, could not, on the first blush of it, be considered as expedient under circumstances so distinguishable.—That the house was armed to give free scope to the rights of the constitution in rescuing first the protestant from the hard bondage of resorting to the plea of necessity, against so great a proportion of his fellow-citizens, and the Roman catholic from the still harder of being subject to it, when the necessity ceased. At the period these laws took place, the spark of liberty that lived in Ireland was enjoyed only by the few protestant and English settlers here, when the misconduct of the Stuart family brought about the event which established the liberty of England, but was but a name here echoed from their shores. Before this the Roman catholics, an oppressed people, ignorant of what liberty was, or how to prize it, attached themselves to a Prince whose religious principles accorded with theirs, and religion was almost their only possession. They were subdued and met the fate of the conquered; and the liberty, then saved by their defeat, was cherished by the protestants, till it has at length blazed forth to bless one portion of the inhabitants of this country, and to inspire the veneration and illuminate the rest; and it is now in the power of this protestant parliament, by communicating this blessing to all, to make the Roman catholics bless the hour of their defeat, as much as the protestants ever hailed that of their triumph. But it is said by some gentlemen, that they entertain tenets adverse to the rights of the constitution, and dangerous to the liberty of a free state. In the first place most of those tenets are already abjured, and all of them are innoxious. If we consult the page of history we shall find that they never were dangerous, but as the Pope had temporal power to back them. As to supremacy, most dwelt on, before the reformation the King was head of the church in temporals, but it is idle to dwell on these. In the whole history of papal influence or intrusion into the concerns of foreign countries, it has ever been proportioned to his temporal power. Where is that now? Does even a shadow of it exist to give hope to the greatest religious bigot of the popish persuasion, or alarm to the greatest political bigot of ours?

But we should consider at what stage of the business we are now arrived. About twenty years back the principle of relaxation lost place, and without detailing its progress to the important concession

of

to 1793, it will be sufficient to observe, that every step of the liberal policy of the protestant was justified by the conduct of the Roman catholics, and its wisdom proved by the gradual extinction of the prejudices of both. From that period to 1793, they were in a course of probation, and from the wretched state in which they then were, they were introduced into the enjoyment of civil rights; but the security of these rights remained in the hands of others altogether, till the nation's voice hailed them into the constitution in 1793. A new principle then prevailed in the protestant mind, which the narrow policy of the day, instead of encouraging, checked; and by dividing the principle, they distracted the country. They gave a share of political rights, by giving the elective franchise;—they denied an effectual one, by refusing the representative;—they conceded the inferior offices of the state, and denied the superior, and this upon the ground of the enlightened mind of the Roman catholics, as if the light shone on the lower classes only, the higher still in darkness—a most preposterous policy. Besides, is not the country as much concerned in the upright conduct of its magistracy, in the due discharge of the functions of a juror of either denominations, as in the exercise of the duties of a teller of the Exchequer, a cashier, or a post-master? and yet qualification was left for the latter, when taken from the former; a policy thus as disgusting to the great body of the Roman catholics, as disgraceful to ourselves, making there a line of demarkation, when our own private interests are concerned to maintain an odious monopoly. It was said in the debate that the Roman catholics had not called for this till urged; and I remember in 1793, it was said that they had not desired the representative franchise; but it does not signify what they call for, or when, and they know little of the nature of man, if they think he will be satisfied with partial freedom, and less of the spirit of the constitution, if they then thought, or think now it will not foster its offspring to its maturity. It has been also said, that the Roman catholics are in effect free, that they enjoy equal laws—equal security in persons and property;—but what is liberty but the participation in that power which makes and preserves law. The first is liberty lent, the last liberty itself.

But we are now called upon to rectify the error of 93, before its worst effects are experienced; well worth gentlemen's attention to weigh the consequences of a general election, if it shall take place before this law passes. The Roman catholics have now the right of voting, and they have still a great separate object to attain. Can it be supposed they will not now unite for its attainment, and that there will not be a Roman catholic banner raised in every county for the professed Roman catholic friend, or most likely tested supporter? Will address, or worse than address, be wanting to inflame the minds of party against party? Will not the whole host of former prejudices and animosities be raised again, and the civil strength of Roman catholics and protestants appear marshalled through the country? and this is to be the closing scene of catholic conciliation.

But

But the preſent ſtate of the country has been alluded to.—We do, it is certain, experience outrage, tumult, and contempt of the laws, and from thence we are become the object to a watchful enemy of its fraternizing policy. I am not fooliſh enough to attribute all theſe outrages to one general ſcheme of diſaffection, but am fooliſh enough to ſay, that if there did not exiſt an obviouſly juſt cauſe of diſſatisfaction and diſcontent, that the attempts of the wicked would fail. It is this makes the deluded people the inſtruments of their factious traitorous machination. 'Tis from this that the eye of our enemy is ever directed to our ſhores, that our ears are daily aſſailed by reports of invaſion; whether true or falſe, our alarms are perpetual, becauſe we are conſcious of the cauſe from whence they ſpring. And I remember once to have heard it ſaid, by a perſon whoſe ſituation gave him the means of knowing that every war which France was engaged in with this country, its firſt meaſure was to excite the diſcontents here, well knowing the ſtrange policy of the country, where all equally love freedom, and where there is a partial enjoyment of it.—In ſhort, in whatever point of view, on whatever ground I take this ſubject, whether of juſtice, our ſureſt guide, of approved policy, of conſtitution, of national ſecurity, or national character, I feel myſelf warm in the adoption of this meaſure to its fulleſt extent, and I do conjure every gentleman in this Houſe to caſt from him all partial monopolizing ideas of policy, look to his country's glory, ſuffer it to riſe an ornament to civil ſociety, a conſpicuous example to the world of liberty acquired by reaſon, not by arms, and a glorious vindication of human nature, againſt the blaſphemy of France, that calls upon rapine, murder, treaſon, and all the cataſtrophe of human wickedneſs as neceſſary inſtruments to aſſert liberty for man.

Sir JOHN PARNEL ſpoke againſt the bill.

Mr. BROWNE (College) ſaid that he ſhould have been glad, on a ſubject of ſuch magnitude, to have been guided by the ſentiments of his conſtituents; but having tried, upon a former occaſion, to obtain them on a ſimilar ſubject, he found ſo great a diverſity of opinion, that he was forced at laſt, as he knew he ſhould in this caſe be obliged, to reſt on his own judgment. It might perhaps be ſuppoſed that that judgment might in ſome meaſure receive its complexion from the opinions of a much revered character in high ſituation, with whoſe intimacy he was known to be honoured; he therefore took that opportunity of declaring, that he never had heard, nor did he know the ſentiments of that great perſon on the ſubject. From motives of delicacy he had never aſked them, and perhaps from ſimilar motives they had never been to him communicated.—He ſaid upon this ſubject he did not expect to pleaſe either party, becauſe he ſhould, as he always had done, follow his own opinions, without ſacrificing to the prejudices of either. He had always been guided in that houſe by two principles, the one a wiſh to preſerve the people from the encroachment of government, the other

other to preſerve the eſtabliſhment and the conſtitution from the violence of the people. An attempt to reconcile theſe two great principles will always, to party men, make their owner appear inconſiſtent, but to himſelf he will appear uniform. With theſe principles, he had always thought that any application from any great and reſpectable body of people ought to be treated with reſpect, and therefore, upon all applications from the catholics, inſtead of talking as ſome did of ſcouting and affronting them, had voted for receiving and liſtening to them at leaſt. On the ſame principles he had wiſhed for every coalition with them, which every body muſt ſee would contribute ſo much to the ſtrength of the country, which was conſiſtent with the ſafety and welfare of the whole empire; but he had always thought that ſuch coalition ſhould advance by very ſlow and cautious ſteps, and ſo as never to endanger the church or the proteſtant intereſt, or inſtead of coalition ſet up one aſcendancy in the room of another. He had therefore been uſed to think that we were proceeding too rapidly—that we were not wiſe for ſo rapid a conjunction. That notwithſtanding all our flattering ſpeeches to each other, there was ſtill much heat, much ancient enmity, much ignorant bigotry to be overcome, before we were ready for a cordial union.—Government had ſometimes appeared to think ſo too, and ſometimes to the reverſe, until by the ſtrangeſt ſyſtem of obſtinacy and conceſſion—of rejecting one day with haughtineſs and granting the next day with humility—of weak, and fluctuating, and inconſiſtent councils for twenty years paſt, that had brought matters to ſuch a ſtate, that it little ſignified what any man thought, or had thought; he was to determine how to act as well as he could in the actual ſtate of affairs.

In this view of things he had aſked himſelf, not in order to determine on the preſent queſtion, not what ought to have been done, but what is to be done now; and it really appeared to him that matters were come to that criſis, that it was juſt as impoſſible to prevent the catholics from coming into parliament, as to ſtop any of the natural laws of gravity. The weight which had been given them, by admitting them to the right of voting for members, muſt, by its natural impulſe, force their way into parliament; he had voted againſt giving them votes at elections, but he knew not after that had been done, upon what principle of conſiſtency Government could oppoſe their admiſſion into the houſe. Some of their opponents in that houſe ſtood upon conſiſtent ground; the objections to their intolerant religion, and their alleged diſaffection; but the adminiſtrations of the country had deſerted theſe grounds, and now talked of nothing but the conſtitution and the coronation oath. He would make but one obſervation, did not the conſtitution and coronation oath then ſtand equally in the way of giving them?

Thinking, therefore, as he did, that this meaſure could not now be prevented but by a union or a military government, and that after having put a weapon in a man's hand, it was not wiſe to provoke him; and thinking alſo that the oppoſition to it was not in moſt men to the meaſure itſelf, but to throw a cenſure on a great perſon

ſon who lately governed the country, and whom he loved and revered, he would vote for the committal of the bill; at the ſame time here was perhaps the only clauſe of it to which he aſſented. He ſaw many clauſes in it, which went, in his opinion, though he was ſure not intended, to overturn the eſtabliſhment; and ſuppoſing it to go into a committee; unleſs thoſe clauſes were totally expunged, he would vote againſt the bill on a third reading. He was of opinion that the eſtabliſhment ſhould be fenced and guarded by all poſſible means; but to prevent a communication of political power ſeemed to him now impoſſible, and the attempt to lead only to eternal diſſention.

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE. On the grounds of juſtice and general expediency the cauſe of the Catholics has been heretofore pleaded, with all that force of genius that, under the guidance of an inflexible love of truth, enables the right hon. Gentleman, who has introduced the bill, to exhauſt the reaſoning on every ſubject that he undertakes to elucidate. I therefore ſhall look at it in a new light and conſider it as a ſtep that leads directly to that parliamentary reform which, at the opening of the laſt ſeſſion, was ſuggeſted, and contended for, with a degree of *unfeigned zeal* that ſtands a pledge for perſeverance, and on the full accompliſhment of which depend abſolutely the proſperity and ſecurity of theſe kingdoms. I conſider it in that light, becauſe it requires the admiſſibility into this aſſembly of a great number of men who are now excluded, amongſt whom, it is evident, that there are thoſe who, in temper and prudence, greatly excel that whole ſect of philoſophers who maintain the doctrines of aſcendancy; and, I am perſuaded, that our only way to guard againſt thoſe dangers, to which we may be expoſed, in conſequence of that reſentment that is excited in a race of men to whom, it does not appear Nature has denied the faculties of men, is to keep our eyes fixed on the ſtrict principles of the conſtitution, and not to ſhut them againſt the light of reaſon.—And, Sir, I am ſure, that it is neither unſeaſonable or irrelative for a man, on the preſent occaſion, to deliver his ſentiments on that ſubject, which appears to be the moſt important that can be conceived, when it is conſidered that the legiſlature and the government of an hoſtile and victorious country are compoſed of philoſophers and patriots; at a time when we can ſee a door lying open by which adventurers and dependants may be admitted into our own, to exerciſe what has been, by the ſame illumined mind, indignantly termed the trade of parliament.

Sir, for the few moments that I mean to ſpeak, I ſhall indulge myſelf in a viſion, and imagine that I am addreſſing a committee of public welfare. And, although, as I have heard, with the deepeſt concern, a Member whoſe underſtanding fits him to have formed a better judgment, unhappily miſtake one of the beſt productions of the pen for an advertiſement for inſurrection.—I too, perhaps may be thought guilty of ſpeaking for it.—Still, I will ſay, that the errros of thoſe miſguided men, who miſtake the republican

publican principle, and the deſigns of thoſe vicious men who pervert and abuſe it, are dangerous to the ſtate and ought to be guarded againſt. But that is not a reaſon why the republican principle ſhould not be inveſtigated and underſtood, as the foundation of our conſtitution, and only foundation of any human government that is juſt; and that, Sir, is a ſentiment that is not, by any torture, to be repreſented as coming from one who wiſhes to pull down the crown. And as a faſt adherent to the crown, I maintain the republican principles, that pillar on which the crown reſts. Sir, it is a celebrated ſpeech of a famous ſtateſman, that he would cling to the crown. I applaud the ſentiment; but I think it had been better expreſſed had he ſaid, that he would cling to the republican principle; for when that actuates men who are diſpoſed to have an individual limited ruler, and to put a crown on his head, it, and it alone, has power to maintain that crown againſt all who would ſhake it. What has been the fate of the crown of France, that the world thought impregnable? Not having been grafted on a republican ſtock, it has periſhed. Sir, it is common with many of thoſe who are juſtly the admirers of our conſtitution to ſay, that there is a certain principle in it that muſt, of itſelf, conduct men back to the right way when they have ſtrayed to a certain diſtance. This is a moſt dangerous maxim, for it tends to make men ſupine, and certainly is no more than the doctrine of thoſe who are but lazy philoſophers. The truth is, that the wiſdom of our anceſtors could go no farther than to form a conſtitution on ſuch a conſtruction, that if, at any time, the monarchical and ariſtocratical branches ſhould invade, to a certain degree, the democratical, it muſt reſolve itſelf into a form of government purely republican. I, Sir, am averſe to that change; and therefore I maintain the republican principle, that pillar on which the crown reſts; ſeeing, that if we ſuffer it to be undermined by thoſe vermin that are engendered in the filth of ſpurious ariſtocracy, the crown muſt tumble at laſt. Sir, it is monſtrous to hear how gangs of men, who are knaves, wilfully confound the ſalutary rejection of a republican form of government with that of the republican principle; and it is equally lamentable to obſerve, how others, who are dunces, are totally incapable of drawing the diſtinction. It is nonſenſe to ſay that republican principle confounds the neceſſary and the natural diſtinctions amongſt men: for though it does aſſert, that all men are equal, as to their rights, it is as ſtrenuous in affirming, that in their qualifications to move in ſociety, with benefit to ſociety, they are not equal, and never have been ſo. As long as they continue to be what they are, and ever have been you muſt have the *profanum vulgus*, and in that *profanum vulgus* will ever be found men of all ſizes, of mere wealth, the richeſt often the moſt contemptible. But the republican principle is not only the ſupporter but the arbiter of diſtinctions. Why is majeſty in our conſtitution emphatically and truly ſtiled the fountain of honour? becauſe it iſſues from that rock the republican principle. And when that adverts to the nobility, with which it not only is perfectly conſiſtent, but of which it is the very author, it means the flower

of

of citizens. In our conſtitution nobility ſignifies the bloſſom on the tree of liberty, the crown is the fruit, and authority ſo produced is certainly wholeſome; but it is not poſſible more ſtrongly to prove the ſpurious and the noxious quality of thoſe weeds, that have ſprung out of the dunghill of parliamentary corruption, than by any interference in the ſmalleſt degree, with the democratical branch—I mean with the formation of it, not with the due controul of it in the proper place—had a ſtrict adherence to original principle, excluſively confined the ariſtocracy to that dignity and high ſpirit of independence which the wiſdom of paſt ages well knew were alone competent to the exerciſe of ſuch a function.

Theſe ſentiments muſt impel any man who feels them to ſupport every meaſure that tends to the re-eſtabliſhment of the conſtitution; and, as I conſider the cauſe of the catholics to be moſt evidently and deeply blended with that of reform, I ſhall conclude with once more repeating the zeal with which I am animated in proſecution of their intereſt, adding this ſingle obſervation—that the peculiar circumſtances of that kingdom call on us, with the loudeſt voice, not only to join the moſt zealous co-operation to the efforts of thoſe men in England who are purſuing reform with ſagacity and ſpirit, but is alſo to take a lead on that ſubject.—For what is the reaſon that that horde of our landed proprietors take up the pernicious and deſpicable abode that they do in England, followed by a train of miſchiefs that are innumerable? It is becauſe the vanity of empty men, not capable of diſcerning how real eſtimation is to be earned, is captivated by the ſound of England's being called the ſeat of Empire; that is, it is where the king's court is held that is full of corruption. Let that corruption be aboliſhed, and thoſe flimſy emigrants muſt return home, to avoid the contempt that ever muſt attend idle, inſignificant, and wandering ſtrangers, in any nation where men are brought back to the exerciſe of the judgment of men; and I rely on it, that the moſt effectual reſtraint on the abſentees of Ireland would be a curb on the corruptions of the Britiſh court. I now, Sir, have endeavoured to do my duty, by ſpeaking my ſentiments with freedom, at a time when men of all nations are ſummoned to circulate, with zeal, the effuſions of truth, and to feel a rivalſhip in doing ſo; and I ſay, that although as the ſubject of a limited monarch, I am not able to perceive any thing in the ſound of the word republic that ought to make men wince, I ſtill am as deeply impreſſed as any man with a ſenſe of the truth of that doctrine that tells me, that we are to bow low to majeſty, as that point to which the power of the people is drawn for the public good, by popular conſent; and alſo to revere the genuine nobleman, whoſe virtues and capacity mark his reſemblance to illuſtrious progenitors, and afford to his country the proſpect of ſucceſſion. For, Sir, though I am far from thinking that that is the wiſeſt part of our conſtitution that fixes an hereditary right of legiſlation in any families, ſtill, as long as we have peers of high blood, who ſhew that blood, it may be prudent not to decry it.

And,

And, before I ſit down I muſt animadvert on a certain cant expreſſion, that is a favourite with many, and by them applied in crimination to thoſe who are able to eſtimate the value of liberty, applied ſometimes in a pert, and ſometimes a preſumptuous tone; the phraſe is, Galliciſm of ſentiment. Sir, for ought I know, the ruling ſentiment in France may be that men ought to encounter all dangers and difficulties rather than ſubmit to arbitrary rule. Sir, our conſtitution is formed on the pureſt principles of liberty, and if men who ſee that deviations have been made, and who fear that every departure is making way for the ſecret and gradual approaches of arbitrary rule, if they are zealous in purſuit of reform, they certainly are actuated by that ſentiment that may be a gallic one; for though Gallia may have adopted it, that is not a reaſon why we ſhould reſign it. And as there may be men who may have taken the alarm at that intelligence that has been lately conveyed to us thro' the debates of the Britiſh parliament—intelligence that it was not poſſible to have collected in this kingdom, that Ireland is in a ſtate of irritation: to them I muſt obſerve, that the people of Ireland are in that ſtate in which it becomes men to be:—in the ſtate of fairly diſcuſſing what is truth and juſtice, and conſequently what leads to their own happineſs and proſperity, and that, Sir, is not irritation. And if thoſe members of the Britiſh parliament continue to abandon the buſineſs of their own country, that they are ſent to manage, in order that they may take up the concerns of another nation that they do not underſtand, and with which they have nothing to do, they will certainly juſtify that French ſarcaſm that has already pronounced ſome of them to be no more than mountebank orators.

Mr. FLETCHER. Sir, I riſe I confeſs with ſome embarraſſment, and a conſiderable degree of diffidence, to expreſs my ſentiments on the queſtion now before the houſe.—I ſhall not pretend to ſay, that I am wholly unaccuſtomed to deliver my thoughts in public, but profeſſional habits are but ill adapted for conveying the mind of the ſpeaker on ſubjects like the preſent: and when I conſider how new I am in this houſe, the preſent being the ſecond time I ever had the honour of addreſſing you, I feel, I muſt own, ſome anxiety, leaſt I ſhould inadvertently let fall any expreſſion, that could be conſtrued to convey diſreſpect to the rules or orders of this houſe.—Sir, no man can revere them more than I, and it would be as preſumptuous as it would be ſilly in an individual like me, purpoſely to intimate the ſlighteſt diſreſpect to the orders of this aſſembly.—If, therefore, amidſt the warmth of debate, any expreſſion ſhall eſcape me of ſuch a tendency, I hope it will be attributed to its true cauſes, inadvertence and error. Sir, I feel my mind deeply impreſſed with the importance of the queſtion now deliberating; a queſtion perhaps of greater magnitude than any ever before diſcuſſed in this aſſembly; and, therefore, I ſhould hold myſelf deficient in that duty which I owe to myſelf, to this houſe, and

to my country, if I omitted to declare in this public manner thoſe, reaſons which have induced me to vote for the bill now before you.

Sir, I think this bill founded in the eternal principles of abſtract juſtice; I deem it to be ſuggeſted by the wiſeſt policy; I hold it to be a meaſure, which when you inveſtigate its probable effects, may may now be adopted with ſafety to all; and laſtly, were there no other motive to influence my conduct on the preſent occaſion, conceding for the ſake of argument, that I may be miſtaken on all, or any of the grounds already enumerated, yet ſtill, I feel the ſalutary regulations of this bill are loudly called for by the preſent ſtate of Europe, and the exiſting ſituation of affairs in this country. I have ſaid the principle of this bill is founded in juſtice—to attempt to demonſtrate a propoſition like this, would be to obſcure it. It is a ſelf-evident truth, that the inhabitants of the ſame country, governed by the ſame laws, ſhould equally participate in the benefits of that conſtitution under which they live.—The code of proſcription, under which the catholics groaned for a century, is almoſt without example in the annals of mankind. It ſeems to be conceded by the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe, that on the principles of juſtice, this code cannot be defended; they have ſought to juſtify it only on the neceſſity of the times—Theſe times have paſſed away—that neceſſity exiſts no longer—why then continue this code of proſcription? For a century have the catholics, in ſilent anguiſh endured this code—their patient reſignation has ſtood the teſt of arduous times—domeſtic calamity and public misfortune, three rebellions and five foreign wars, by affording opportunities of inſurrection, only ſerved, as gold is tried in the furnace, to prove their loyalty. Shall not an ordeal like this, be deemed a ſufficient trial of fidelity? or ſhall it be ſuppoſed contrary to the dictates of reaſon, and the experience of mankind, that the catholics having demeaned themſelves as loyal ſubjects, while under the preſſure of the ſeveral laws, ſhall ſeek to aſſail the principles of the conſtitution, as ſoon as they ſhall be admitted to the full enjoyment of its benefits? But, perhaps, what juſtice would concede, policy ought to deny—I aſk you what meaning do you wiſh to convey by that term policy? Do you underſtand by that term meaſures likely to promote the public good, or will you beſtow it upon ſuch as are ſure to aggrandize the *few* at the expence of the *many*? Shall that meaſure be called good policy which will certainly unite the whole nation, or ſhall good policy be truly found in what tends to its diſunion?

Do you really wiſh for the aggrandizement of your native land? or are there to be found amongſt you, men who ſicken and repine at its proſperity, who inſure private emolument by public calamity? If you really wiſh for union amongſt the natives of this too long diſtracted country, behold it in this bill—If you doubt the good policy of ſuch a union, conſider on one ſide its effects, and on the other, the conſequences of civil diſcord. No ſooner was the ſword ſheathed after the victories of William, than a war commenced more deſtructive and exterminating, than had been waged in the field—A war of penal ſtatutes and civil proſcriptions; by the ſilent operation of which,

which, the natives of Ireland, inſtead of a people, became a vile and degraded populace, and the conſtitutional independence of the country was deſtroyed. The revolution of William has been called by the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe, a glorious revolution—glorious it certainly was for England—for Ireland it was diſaſtrous in the extreme, and was attended with the moſt pernicious effects—the annihilation of her woollen manufacture—the extinction of her commerce, the total loſs of her legiſlative independence: againſt the uſurped power of England, the illuſtrious Molyneaux, the friend of Locke and of mankind, a name dear to Ireland, raiſed his voice, but raiſed it in vain—The parliament of England ordered his book to be burned by the hands of the common hangman.—Penal ſtatute followed penal ſtatute in rapid ſucceſſion, and in a few years the Iriſh parliament became ſo totally loſt to a ſenſe of national honour, that a reſolution for granting the ſupplies to the crown for a period of twelve years, in the adminiſtration of Lord Carteret, was loſt in this houſe only by a ſingle voice. Why ſhould I longer dwell upon what it is painful to remember—the utter debaſement of national character which followed. The idea of a patriot was loſt in the country; or if ever recollected, it was recollected merely as a ſneer, and a term of reproach—as a name for a man who ſought for individual emolument at the public expence. You could not have a patriot,—for you had not a country. The period which immediately ſucceeded the paſſing of the octennial bill, was an era of the greateſt political debaſement. The enaction of that law produced a revolution in Ireland, more ſalutary than that boaſted revolution, of which we have heard ſo much this night. This law in ſome degree awaked the ſlumbering ſpirit of the Iriſh nation; religious rancour became ſoftened and meliorated; the generations perſonally hoſtile to each other had paſſed away. Theſe advances towards a partial union of the people, rapidly produced the moſt ſalutary effects—the catholics were permitted to teſtify their allegiance to his majeſty's perſon and government—In 1771, the catholic mortgage bill paſſed this houſe—the common-law rights of purchaſe and deſcent, and the power of making wills were reſtored—what followed? a free trade—a bill of your own to regulate your army—the habeas corpus act—a bill to ſecure the independence of your judges—the repeal of the 6th of Geo. I. in England, followed by a declaratory act in the ſame country, recognizing the independence of the Iriſh parliament.—Such have been the effects of a partial union; therefore, the meaſure now under deliberation, is not only founded in the eternal principles of abſtract juſtice, but it is alſo dictated by the ſoundeſt policy—if that can be called true policy, which advances the power and the wealth of a people: I have ſaid this meaſure is juſt and politick, I now ſay it is alſo ſafe. During a century of oppreſſion, the catholics were peaceful and loyal; ſhall they ceaſe to be ſo, ſo ſoon as the galling weight of that oppreſſion ſhall be totally removed? Shall an apprehenſion be entertained of their attempting to ſubvert the conſtitution, the very moment in which they

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ſhall be admitted to the full enjoyment of its bleſſings? In my mind, ſuch apprehenſions are not warranted by hiſtory, which the wiſe hiſtorian of Greece has called, philoſophy teaching by examples, by the experience of mankind, or by the dictates of common ſenſe. If ſuch are the deſigns of the Catholics, why approach, I aſk you, this houſe in the ſtile of humble petition?—Why not await for a ſeaſon the completion of thoſe deſigns they are ſaid to entertain, and if they have the power and the will too as it is ſaid they have, vindicate their claims by force of arms?—Thoſe gentlemen appear to me inconſiſtent in their mode of reaſoning, who at one and the ſame time attribute to the catholics of the preſent day the religious bigotry and intolerance of their anceſtors, and accuſe them of a deſign of ſubverting the conſtitution in church and ſtate, by the introduction of a popiſh democracy, tainted with the leaven of Gallic phrenzy.—Such a combination of politics and religion is a monſter that never did and never can exiſt, except in the diſtempered imaginations of ſome gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe. Sir, I truſt no honourable member of this houſe, more truly reſpects the proteſtant eſtabliſhment and the national religion than I do.—It is a ſyſtem of religion wiſe and moderate in itſelf, and fit for a rational mind; but in this bill I can ſee no danger to the proteſtant eſtabliſhment or the national religion. Sir, the catholics of the preſent day have but little reſemblance to the papiſts of the laſt century, except in their attachment to a limited and hereditary monarchy; I ſay a limited monarchy, for I could eaſily demonſtrate, were this the ſeaſon, that the papiſts of the laſt century, particularly under the adminiſtration of lord Strafford, were the true friends of Iriſh liberty, and the zealous aſſertors of the rights of their native land againſt foreign domination.——I am perſuaded thoſe ſpeculative tenets of the church of Rome, formidable I admit to every Sovereign, and hoſtile to the government of every country—I mean the ſupremacy and infallibility of the Pope, and the power of diſpenſing with the oaths of allegiance—exiſt no longer, except in the neglected volumes of ſchoolmen and theologians.—The Pope is ſcarcely now more than the Biſhop of Rome.—When the Jeſuits, that wiſe and dangerous order exiſted, who nearly monopolized the abilities and talents of the regular clergy of the church of Rome, who guided the conſciences of all the catholic Sovereigns, and controuled the politics of every popiſh ſtate in Europe; when theſe men acted in concert under the abſolute government of their general, to ſupport and advance the papal power, ſo long was that power truly dangerous and formidable. But that Society is now extinct, and with it has fallen the papal power; a power, the total deſtruction of which, notwithſtanding what has fallen from the right hon. gentleman on the other ſide of the houſe (Mr. Pelham), and the apprehenſions he ſeems to entertain from its rapid decline, I cannot regret.

But you have been told by a great law-officer of the crown (Solicitor General), that by law you cannot paſs this bill. You have been told that the bill of rights preſcribes certain oaths which

muſt be taken, and a certain declaration which muſt be ſubſcribed by every member of the legiſlative aſſembly. You have been told that theſe oaths and this declaration form part of the ſolemn compact entered into at the time of the revolution between the crown and the repreſentatives of the people, and that you are now bound by law to preſerve this compact inviolable in all its parts. This doctrine has been confidently aſſerted by the right hon. and learned gentleman, and he has called upon any conſtitutional lawyer on this ſide of the houſe to riſe in his place and contradict him if he can.

Sir, I am a lawyer by profeſſion as well as the learned gentleman; and pretend to ſome little knowledge of the conſtitution; and I deny the doctrine to be conſtitutional or legal, as laid down by the learned member. Conceding for a moment for the ſake of argument that a compact, if it were one, entered into between the crown and a convention on behalf of the Engliſh people at the time of the revolution, and which never was eſtabliſhed by any act of the Iriſh legiſlature, 'till, after a lapſe of four ſcore years, it was recognized as law by Yelverton's act;—conceding thus much, yet I affirm that no act of parliament is ſo permanent and durable in its nature, as to be unalterable and incapable of repeal.—Conſtitutional experience and precedent refute this doctrine.—Before that compact parliament had more than once changed the religion of the ſtate, and altered the ſucceſſion to the crown; nay, even ſince that compact the houſe of Hanover has, by the power of parliament, been placed on the Britiſh throne.—This compact therefore, like all other compacts, muſt be ſubject to change.

Sir, theſe oaths and this declaration, not even forming a ſubſtantive part of the bill of rights, but ſubjoined to it, were calculated, and I will not heſitate to ſay wiſely, for the meridian of England at that period, and not for Ireland; but ſuppoſing them to have been even wiſely adapted to the ſtate of Ireland, it was the ſtate of Ireland as it then ſtood, and not the ſtate of Ireland at the preſent day. And ſhall it be boldly aſſerted in this houſe, that you cannot now by law deliberate whether a great majority of the Iriſh nation ſhall be admitted to a full participation of the benefits of the conſtitution, becauſe a parliament had decided a century ago, that this majority ſhould not at that period enjoy thoſe benefits?—But this doctrine is as repugnant to law and precedent, as it is to the common ſenſe of mankind. Shall the compact at the revolution be ſaid to have precluded all future operations of the human mind?—Was this compact ſo conſummately wiſe, that Wiſdom did then for ever cloſe her books?—Have knowledge and literature been advanced, and the boundaries of ſcience been enlarged in vain?—And is the parliament of Ireland immoveably fixed at a point, while the reſt of the world rapidly advances in the ſciences of morals and legiſlation?—Arguments of this kind, if they had not been gravely and ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on, could ſcarcely have called for or merited a ſerious examination.

A right

A right hon. gentleman, (Mr. Pelham) has noticed the miſchiefs that generally attend the abuſe of words, and has excepted to the phraſe, "*Catholic emancipation.*"—I do, for my own part, moſt heartily concur with the right hon. gentleman, in thinking that great miſunderſtanding has been produced amongſt men by the abuſe of words; and almoſt every ſcience may complain of thoſe abuſes, upon which the philoſophical delineator of the human mind has employed one entire book of his immortal work—But, Sir, the phraſe, "*proteſtant aſcendancy,*" to which the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe ſeem devoted, appears to me to be a phraſe, at leaſt as exceptionable as that of "*catholic emancipation.*" Proteſtant aſcendancy is a cabaliſtical term, invented by the demon of diſcord, to conjure up a ſpirit of diſunion amongſt the people of Ireland. For my own part, Sir, I have not been able to attach to it any preciſe determinate meaning; nor am I aware of the peculiar idea, the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe would wiſh to convey by this celebrated phraſe. If proteſtant aſcendancy be underſtood to mean an habitual interference of the Iriſh hierarchy in the politicks of the ſtate, I confeſs, I am not a friend to ſuch habitual interference. Eccleſiaſtical domination appears to me to have been productive of calamities amongſt mankind in every age, and in every country, from the period that the church ſheltered itſelf under the Imperial robe of Conſtantine, crimſoned with the blood of his own family, down to the preſent times; and therefore I muſt own I am not a friend to eccleſiaſtical domination: That power hath received a check in every ſtate in Europe; it becomes not us, therefore, to perpetuate it here. A connection between church and ſtate, ſo far as to ſecure the permanent eſtabliſhment of a national religion, is in my apprehenſion a connection ſalutary and wiſe, but a very cloſe alliance between church and ſtate, tends to ſanction and eſtabliſh the manifold abuſes that have crept into both—abuſes that every honeſt man, and ſincere well wiſher to the proſperity of his native land, ought to wiſh to ſee corrected and removed. If by the proteſtant aſcendancy, is intended a continuation of thoſe bleſſings that are ſecured by a proteſtant government, I am its firm and attached friend, but if it be ſomething hoſtile to every improvement that can be ſuggeſted in politics or morals, I care not how ſoon ſuch aſcendancy is deſtroyed: But can it be ſuppoſed, that the admiſſion of the Catholics into a participation of the bleſſings ſecured to this country by a proteſtant conſtitution, will deſtroy that conſtitution? If ſo, how is this deſtruction to be effected? Whether by force or by fraud? Surely force cannot now be apprehended, for if the catholics were inclined to uſe it, they want not the repeal of thoſe laws that exclude them from a ſeat in this houſe, to enable them to uſe their phyſical ſtrength; and while the proteſtant aſcendancy continues to be upheld by the lives and fortunes of thoſe right hon. and hon. gentlemen, who have ſo boldly ſtood forward on this night, to pledge themſelves in ſupport of that aſcendancy, it ſurely cannot be in danger.—But if the catholics have any ſhare in

legiſlation, the conſtitution may be undermined by fraud. Sir, I ſhould ſuppoſe proteſtant to be at leaſt equal to catholic wiſdom and prudence, and that this prudence and this wiſdom will be applied to the preſervation of the conſtitution, and to counteract the machinations of catholic fraud; and I cannot ſuppoſe, that the proteſtants, after what I have heard this night, will ſwerve from thoſe principles; for certainly the gentlemen on the other ſide of the houſe, are now incapable, and will at all times be incapable of being ſeduced from principles which they have on this occaſion ſo warmly aſſerted—Gentlemen who profeſs themſelves ſtrongly attached to the principles of other men who have lived a century ago, will not, I am certain, be ſoon likely to forget their own.

Gentlemen, however, have urged the danger of innovation, and of innovation at this particular ſeaſon; with reſpect to the general idea, the danger of innovation, that argument proves too much to urge it to the length of its principle, and it goes to approve every improvement in religion, politics, or morals. Magna Charta was an innovation——the reformation an innovation, the revolution was an innovation; and of courſe the proteſtant aſcendancy was a very great innovation. Therefore, abſtractedly conſidered, this argument drawn from the danger of innovation, ought to have no weight. But it has been ſaid, innovation at this particular ſeaſon is dangerous; and this argument, Sir, brings me to conſider the neceſſity of adopting this meaſure, from the preſent criſis of affairs in this country, and the general ſtate of Europe.

Sir, in my apprehenſion, when you conceded the elective franchiſe, you *neceſſarily* conceded the right of ſitting in both houſes of parliament.—With regard to a ſeat in the houſe of commons, it would be inſane in my opinion to deny it.—You have gratified the great body of the catholics with the elective franchiſe, will you now exaſperate the ariſtocratical part of that body, by refuſing them a participation in the legiſlature, to which their opulence and ſtation in life give them a natural and political claim?—How inconſiſtently you reaſon!—You ſay the catholics are friends to democracy, and of courſe hoſtile to the ariſtocratical intereſt in this country—and yet you grant the demands of the democratical part, and reſiſt the claims of the ariſtocratical part of that body; that is, you have enabled the catholic people to effectuate the deſigns you have imputed to them, and you exaſperate their leaders who might reſiſt ſuch deſigns; nay, you give the heads of the catholic body an intereſt and a common cauſe in promoting what ſome men call a radical and compleat reform in parliament, and thereby raiſing the democratical upon the ruins of the ariſtocratical part of the conſtitution. I ſay then, Sir, the imperious neceſſity of being conſiſtent with yourſelves, of giving weight to your own arguments, of preventing the miſchiefs which you yourſelves apprehend, calls upon you to adopt the preſent meaſure. Some honourable gentlemen who have recurred to the argument of expediency, and who do not ſo much reſiſt the principle as the ſeaſon of conceſſion, are equally inconſiſtent:—What, you conceded the

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elective franchiſe when a great body of the proteſtant people was inimical to ſuch a conceſſion, when your table was filled with petitions againſt the meaſure from every grand jury in every county in the kingdom; and you will not concede now the very little that remains to be conceded, when the whole body of the proteſtant communion appears to be warm, nay zealous, in the catholic cauſe. Does this look like wiſe policy, or a determined purpoſe of uniting every individual of this country, without theſe walls, in one common cauſe againſt you and the meaſures you purſue?—Where are the petitions againſt the meaſure now under deliberation? not one can be found—no artifice could procure one.——No, Sir, in a very ſhort period indeed, there has been a miraculous coalition of all parties and all orders without theſe walls. How can you reſiſt the wiſhes of a united people? and, if you could reſiſt them, would it be prudent, would it be wiſe, to do ſo?—Can you ſtop the progreſs of the human mind, or prevent the thoughts and opinions of men from influencing their actions?—Can you prevent an united people from acting ſtrongly, when it ſhall think deeply?—Contemplate the ſtate of Europe, upon which, for reaſons ſufficiently obvious, I forbear to dwell; I wiſh not to irritate, but I wiſh, and anxiouſly wiſh, to ſooth and appeaſe, even upon this topic, the exiſting ſtate of Europe. Some honourable gentlemen have reaſoned with ſtrange inconſiſtency; revolutions, ſay they, are rapidly advancing throughout Europe, therefore reſiſt innovation at home;—but, I ſay, adopt the meaſure, while you have yet left the choice of adoption. If revolutions have advanced, and are rapidly advancing abroad, do you apply a remedy to this epidemic phrenzy, and do not, by your conduct, invite a revolution at home. But you would concede to humble petition what you would not concede to imperious demand: to that argument I anſwer, or rather to that topic of irritation, I deny the fact; for I ſay the claims of the catholics come before you in the ſtile of humble petition, and not of imperious demand.—Again I ſay, I do not approve of a mode of reaſoning, drawn from the feelings of men in private life; I think one million ſhould not addreſs three millions of people, preciſely in the ſtile one gentleman would addreſs another:—In private life, a gentleman of high ſpirit and a delicate ſenſe of honour, might ſay to another—Sir, I admit the juſtice of your claim, but as you have demanded it as a right, and not as a favour, you ſhall not have it. I own I do not feel the cogency of reaſoning like this from one great body of the nation to another;—between ſuch bodies the ſenſe of public utility ſhould ſuperſede the ſenſe of perſonal honour; therefore I cannot approve of the conduct of thoſe honourable gentlemen who have alluded this night to the debates in Francis-ſtreet, and have borrowed topics of irritation from the catholic declamations there. Sir, I think it beneath the dignity of this houſe, to allude to thoſe declamations; and ſuch alluſions, I muſt ſay, have not been made

this night to anſwer any good purpoſe, though I can eaſily conceive a purpoſe they might have been thought to have anſwered. If any thing prudent, any thing rational, any thing wiſe, has fallen from the ſpeakers at that catholic meeting, gentlemen may, in their private ſpeculations, condeſcend to adopt it, for prudence, reaſon and wiſdom, will not do theſe honourable gentlemen much miſchief, let them come from where they may; but if any thing inflammatory, ſeditious, irrational, or abſurd, has fallen from that quarter, why have gentlemen made it their own, and repeated it this night within theſe walls.—To conclude, Sir, I do give my moſt earneſt ſupport to the preſent bill; I think it a meaſure which may be ſafely adopted, a meaſure founded in the wiſeſt policy, dictated by the voice of juſtice, and demanded, imperiouſly demanded, by the neceſſity of the times. The queſtion before you for your deciſion, is a queſtion of mighty magnitude—it involves the deareſt intereſts of yourſelves and of your poſterity—and may that all-wiſe Being from whom all good counſel proceeds, direct you for the beſt.

Mr. HOARE ſpoke in favour of the bill.

Mr. GRATTAN. What brings forward this bill? a Right Hon. Gentleman interrogates.—Juſtice.—'Tis the progeny of the public mind—'tis the birth mature of time;—does he ſolicit more cauſes? The Iriſh miniſter who in 1792 inſulted the Catholics, and the Britiſh miniſter who in 1792 encouraged them, and his new friends who in 1794 patronized them, and both, who in the ſame year conſented to the Catholic emancipation, though in 1795 they have deſerted that engagement.—Does the Right Hon. Gentleman wiſh to hear more cauſes?—The defeats of theſe miniſters who have made it neceſſary to combat by the privileges of the conſtitution the principles of an enemy who they cannot reſtrain by arms; and ſtill more neceſſary in Ireland, becauſe they had taken away her troops, her arms, and her artillery, and left her to fight the enemy by the native ſpirit and the unanimity of her people.—But we are aſked, why bring on this queſtion in war?—Becauſe you want the ſervice of the Catholic in time of war, and therefore in that time ſhould give him the inducement; becauſe if you mean to give up the Proteſtant aſcendancy on the peace, you had better not expoſe him to the provocation of the refuſal in the war. Becauſe it is folly in the extreme to embrace unpopularity, when you want the people, in order to embrace the people when you ſtand leſs in need of popularity.—Beſides, what ſecurity if this meaſure is poſtponed, that it will be conceded voluntarily?—Who will anſwer for the honour of public men?—Who will anſwer for their continuance?

A Right Hon. Gentleman has advanced an argument which goes to exclude the Catholics for ever. Their emancipation, ſays he, cannot be agreed to without danger to the conſtitution of both countries.—Dreadful Denunciation! Eternal Decree!—Without danger to the conſtitution of both countries, does the member ſay?

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On what ground?—He tells you, becauſe if you eſtabliſh their emancipation, you muſt repeal the oath and declaration againſt the Papal ſupremacy, the Virgin Mary, and the Real Preſence.—It ſeems then we have been in a miſtake all this time, and that the preſent danger is not republican principles, democratic ſentiments, or French opinions, it is the Pope, the Virgin Mary, and the Real Preſence; and to guard againſt ſuch influences, obſerving and lamenting as he does, that the Pope has loſt all power, he propoſes to alienate the affection of 3,000,000 of your people, and one-fourth of the empire.—Thus he propoſes to realize the danger which exiſts, in order to ſtrengthen you againſt thoſe dangers which are vaniſhed. He ſeems to ſee danger in every thing which is ſafe, and ſafety in nothing but in that which is dangerous. The temerity of ſuch caution, and the phrenzy of ſuch precaution, ſhelter themſelves under the name of the revolution.—It ſeems we are to ſtate names againſt things, and ſounds againſt principles.—The revolution was a great event, but has nothing to ſay to the preſent queſtion.—It eſtabliſhed great principles of liberty, which did not take place in Ireland for near one hundred years. It began by impoſing on you the power of the Britiſh parliament, and thoſe very oaths required in the firſt of William, were impoſed by an Engliſh act of parliaments, and before they were arguments againſt the liberty of the Catholics, were badges of the ſlavery of the Proteſtants; but in the courſe of years, the Iriſh Proteſtant availed himſelf of the principles of the revolution, in a courſe of years it is reaſonable the Iriſh Catholic ſhould avail himſelf of the ſame principles.—That courſe is now completed; the leading part of the revolution is the claim of right which is founded on the *petition of right*, which was declaritory of the law of England, obtained by the Catholic anceſtors of the Engliſh nation; and tho' religion interfered in the diſpute, yet religion was not, and liberty was, the eſſence of the revolution.—And now, when the cauſe of religious interference, namely, the adverſe claim to the crown, is at an end, you are unwarranted in oppoſing the principles of the revolution in their extent to all the Iriſh. But the gentleman argues the contrary, he quotes the revolution againſt its own principles, he urges the revolution as a bar to liberty.

The Right Hon. Gentleman adds, that the Catholic excluſion is neceſſary for the connection as well as the conſtitution; and he teaches us to think, that he ſpeaks with the authority of the Britiſh cabinet.—What! will they ſay ſo? will they?—Will that miniſtry whoſe country has loſt Holland, loſt Brabant, loſt a great part of Germany, loſt the terror of the Britiſh name, will they reject the Catholics of Ireland?—Will they, after the loſs of America, with an encreaſe of debt in the laſt thirty years of above 200,000,000; with a new Republican Empire riſing upon them, dreadful from its principles, its power, its extent, and its victories—Will they talk in this manner?—Have they left themſelves any room for internal proſcription, or for internal perſecution, or for theological tyranny under the maſk of religion?—Or have they

they left themſelves enough of territories, or ſpace enough in the world, to proſcribe three-fourths of this iſland and one-fourth of the empire?——To what allies and aſſiſtance have this miniſtry reſorted, who, for the ſake of the connection, would exclude the Iriſh Catholics? Are not their armies moſtly Catholic? Is not your militia moſtly Catholic? Is not a great portion of their ſeamen Catholic? Are not the princes with whom they are leagued Catholics? The king of Pruſſia is not ſo, nor the Dutch I acknowledge. What Catholic prince have they not ſought? What Popiſh Potentate have not truſted? Have they not canvaſſed every Papiſt in Europe, and bought every pennyworth of blood, and every pound of fleſh, and begged of princes to take their ſubſidies? And do they now caſt off 3,000,000 of Iriſh?—They think it better it ſeems to buy Pruſſian faith with Engliſh money, than Iriſh ſoldiers with Iriſh privileges.—They think it better to neglect unanimity againſt France, and throw up new dikes and fortifications againſt the Pope and the Pretender.—They ſee, with diſmay, two or three ſervants of the crown diſmiſſed, the excluſion of 3,000,000 of men they regard not it ſeems; they alienate the ſubject to preſerve the connection. At what does the Engliſh cabinet tremble? At the loſs of Holland? No, they bore that well, very well. The loſs of Brabant? No, they bore that well, very well. The anxious ſtate of the Weſt-Indies? No, that too they bore very well; but when a propoſal is made to give Iriſh ſubjects conſtitutional privileges, then fears, ſuch as they might have felt at the event of their own operations, begin to ſcare the miniſtry of Great Britain. So trembled the Carthaginian aſſembly. Thoſe great men who had the honour to preſide over the diſgraces of their country, had borne the loſs of their armies,—the loſs of their elephants,—the loſs of their power, with much philoſophy, but when ſomething that touched their own cabal, ſome tax on themſelves was propoſed, then they alſo trembled. The ſenate of Carthage trembled—like the Britiſh miniſtry, they were moved by nothing ſo much but the leaſt of their misfortunes.

But when I ſuppoſe the Britiſh miniſtry really affected by fears, either for the conſtitution or the connection, on the preſent queſtion, I pay too little deference to their underſtanding; they are alarmed about neither, and I will prove it. Three months ago they were willing to concede this very queſtion; their preſent oppoſition to it muſt, it follows, have ariſen from ſomething that has happened ſince, which they do not chuſe to diſcover, and not from their apprehenſion about the connection or the conſtitution. It ſeems it was ſafe for the connection and conſtitution in 1794 to admit the Catholics, but in 1795 fatal to both. No, a few months ago this houſe would have paſſed this bill, and the Britiſh cabinet would have conſented:—Now if the conſtitution or the connection were objections, they were permanent objections, and exiſted when the cabinet and the parliament were friends to the bill; and therefore whatever may be the preſent motives of both, the connection and conſtitution enter not into the conſideration of either. The Right Hon.

Gentleman

Gentleman having alluded to authority in England, accounts for the difficulty in Ireland; he aſcertains the ſeat of the diſeaſe, and the place of the impediment; and it appears, that the bar to the freedom of the Catholics of Ireland is the cabinet of Great Britain. I rejoice that the people of Ireland ſtand acquitted. The Proteſtants of Ireland are willing; vaſt numbers of them have petitioned.—The great cities are willing; the great mercantile intereſt are willing:—The cabinet of England is the bar to the freedom of the Catholics; and the diſpute is no longer a queſtion between Proteſtant and Catholic, but between the Britiſh miniſter and the Iriſh nation. And on this ground I do not content myſelf with diſſenting from them, and from thoſe who ſay that Catholic emancipation would be fatal to connection; I ſay preciſely the contrary; I ſay Catholic emancipation is neceſſary to connection.—I will add alſo, it has become neceſſary to empire, her miniſters have made it ſo, as the bounds of the empire contract, the privileges of her conſtitution *muſt* be extended.

But I find that Catholic emancipation is held incompatible with our monarchy.—What! his majeſty, the head of a Catholic league—the king of Corſica—the lord of Canada—the great ally of the Emperor—the grand confederate of the king of Spain—the protector of the Pope.—The king of England, whoſe armies are Catholic, whoſe European connections are Catholic—are his Iriſh ſubjects the only Catholics in whom he wont confide? Has he found religion make the Emperor falſe, or the Pruſſian faithful.—Such were not the ſentiments of the ſpeeches from the throne in 1793 and 1795, when his majeſty calls on all his ſubjects to defend their religion and their conſtitution. What religion? a religion of diſabilities.—What conſtitution? a conſtitution of excluſion. Am I to underſtand that his majeſty called forth his Catholic ſubjects to fight for a conſtitution which was to be ſhut againſt them, and for a religion which was dangerous to the king, and penal to the Catholic.—No, it was not the Pope, nor yet the Pretender,—it was Paine, it was the French Republic, againſt which you called for the zeal of your people, and held out the bleſſings of the conſtitution. But now it ſeems it is the Antichriſt againſt whom you place your batteries, the Virgin, and the Real Preſence; and in that ſtrain of grave and ſolemn raving, a Right Hon. Gentleman propoſes to take up arms againſt the grave of Popery, which is ſhut, and to precipitate into the gulph of Republicaniſm, which is open;—perfectly ſafe for the king, he and thoſe who join him think it, to affront the Catholic ſubjects by groſs ſuſpicions;—others have proceeded to the groſſeſt invectives; perfectly ſafe they think it, to baniſh them from all places at court and ſeats in parliament; to tell Catholic virtue, Catholic talents, Catholic ambition, you muſt not ſerve the king, you may have property influence, but you muſt not act in conſtituted aſſemblies, nor in any rank or diſtinction for the crown.—Perfectly ſafe they think it to eſtabliſh an incompatibility between popery and allegiance.—Perfectly ſafe they think it to inſulate the throne, and reduce the king of Ireland,

like

like the Pope, to Proteſtant guards inſtead of a people, and then, it is propoſed, that thoſe Proteſtant guards ſhould monopolize all the powers of government, and privileges of the conſtitution, as a reward for their diſintereſtedneſs. In ſupport of ſuch a policy, it has been advanced in a very idle publication, that the Roman Catholics, as long as they have the feeling of men, muſt reſiſt the natural propenſities of the human heart, if they do endeavour to ſubvert a Proteſtant king; but I paſs that over with the ſcorn it deſerves. It has been alſo ſaid, that his majeſty's oath is a bar.—Oaths are ſerious things.—To make them political pretences is a high crime—to make an obligation, taken for the aſſurance of liberty, a covenant againſt it—to impoſe on conſcience a breach of duty—to make the piety of the king the ſcourge of his people—to make the oath of the king the curſe of his people, is an attempt atrocious in the extreme.——Examine the argument, and you find the oath was taken three years before the excluſion of the Iriſh Catholic;—the oath is the firſt of William, the teſts that exclude them the third; ſo that his majeſty muſt have ſworn in the ſtrain and ſpirit of prophecy.—Examine a little further, and you will find his majeſty ſwears, not in his legiſlative but in his executive capacity,—he ſwears to the laws he is to execute, not againſt the laws which parliament may think proper to make. In that ſuppoſition he would, by his oath, controul not himſelf but parliament, and ſwear not to execute laws but to prevent them.—Examine a little further, and you will find the words of the oath cannot ſupport the interpretation:—"I will ſupport the true profeſſion of the "goſpel, and the Proteſtant religion as by law eſtabliſhed." This is the oath—I will perpetuate civil incapacities on Catholics—this is the comment. Such comment ſuppoſes the true profeſſion of the goſpel to ſtand on pains and penalties, and the Proteſtant religion on civil proſcription. Examine the oath a little further; and, if the comment is true, the oath has been broken—broken by his majeſty's gracious recommendation in favour of the Catholics in 1793—broken by the grant of the elective franchiſe—broken by the Canada bill—broken by the Corſican conſtitution. Hear the ſpeech of the viceroy of Corſica;—His excellency having recommended to parliament the civil and military eſtabliſhment, proceeds at laſt to the church, and adviſes them to ſettle that eſtabliſhment with his holineſs the Pope. Very proper all this no doubt; but if the interpretation is true, what an outrageous breach all this of his majeſty's coronation oath. I ſhould aſk, whether in the interpretation of the oath, his majeſty has conſulted his Iriſh biſhop and yet he could have found among them men perfectly competent. I will venture to ſay, that the head of our clergy underſtands the Catholic queſtion better than thoſe conſulted; I will add, he does not, I believe, diſapprove of their emancipation, nor approve of the arguments againſt them. But it ſeems, in matters that relate to the Iriſh church, the Iriſh clergy are not to be conſulted, and an Engliſh epiſcopacy, like an Engliſh cabinet, is to dominate the deſtiny of Ireland.—I have great reſpect for the learned prelates of

England,

England, particularly for one, whoſe exemplary virtue and apoſtolic character, qualify him to preſide over whatever is learned, pure, or holy; but in Iriſh affairs, in matters in which our civil as well as our religious intereſts are implicated, might I ſay, his majeſty's counſellors ſhould be his Iriſh parliament and his Iriſh biſhops. It ſeems highly prejudicial to the church and the monarchy, that the argument which excludes the Catholic under pretence to ſtrengthen both, ſhould be attended with circumſtances that beſpeak the Iriſh hierarchy a cypher—the Engliſh hierarchy a nuiſance, and repreſents the king a magiſtrate as ſworn againſt the privileges of his people. So far am I from agreeing to ſuch an argument, that I muſt here repeat what I advanced before, and ſay, that I do not diſſent, but I contradict. I don't ſay that Catholic emancipation is compatible with the preſent monarchical government in Ireland, but that it is now become neceſſary to it; and that as for the preſervation of the connection, you muſt make it compatible with the privileges of three-fourths of your people—ſo, for the preſervation of your monarchy, you make monarchy alſo compatible with thoſe privileges, you muſt make the regal capacity of the king compatible with the civil capacity of the ſubject.

In the ſame ſtrain of narrow argument, have gentlemen introduced the church, as endangered by the emancipation of the Catholics.—They propoſe to attaint 3,000,000 of their fellow-ſubjects for its ſafety.—They propoſe to make it the oſtenſible cauſe for incapacitating three-fourths of the iſland; they make the people its enemy, and then they think they have provided for its ſafety.—They think the religious difference not ſufficient; they add temporal cauſes; ſo that the loſs of their privileges is to be added to the preference of their religion; to ſecure to the eſtabliſhed church, Catholic hoſtility, they add the new and powerful motives of intereſt, ambition and pride, to the languid motive of religion, and in the complication of hoſtile paſſions find a ſecurity for the church. This alarm explains itſelf, and is acknowledged to be an apprehenſion for the fate of tythe.—Thus the true profeſſion of the goſpel, and the Proteſtant religion, take ſomewhat a groſſer complexion, and the divine ſtrain of argument is explained into ſomething very temporal and very mercenary.—Here is a new odium, and therefore a new danger annexed to tythe.—Three-fourths of your people pay the church without compenſation, and therefore it is propoſed they ſhould pay it without privilege. The payment they render is made an argument againſt the liberties they ſeek. They pay the clergy the profits of their church, and the clergy are deſired to deprive them of the bleſſings of the conſtitution, leſt they uſe the power to defeat the payment; that is, the clergy are adviſed to return evil for good, and to juſtify pains and penalties by preſuppoſing delinquency. But I ſpeak not of the immorality, I rely on the impolicy of ſuch an argument ſo long as tythe is only a temporal payment without ſpiritual conſolation.—The Catholic like the Preſbyterian may ſubmit; but when once the tythe of the clergy is made inſeparable from the civil incapacities of the people, when

to

to preſerve your tythe you diſqualify your fellow ſubjects, tythe is on the brink of ruin.—When the inſtitution of tythe in made incompatible with the conſtitution of the land, tythe is on the brink of ruin, 'tis not in your piety to ſave it.—When once it is to encounter, not only the love of gain, but every other motive in the human breaſt, then tythe is in danger.—Thus the advocates for this objection expoſe the church, its eſtabliſhment, and its income in the front of the battle, as they did before expoſe the connection and the monarchy, and repreſent under an affectation of zeal, the eſtabliſhment of the Proteſtant church, like the connection and the monarchy, inconſiſtent with the liberties of the people.

From the church their error proceeds to the ſenate, and it is urged, that parliament will be deſtroyed by the admiſſion of the Catholics;—that parliament will at laſt be deſtroyed, like man and the works of man, I do ſuppoſe.—That inſtitution, ſays ſome famous author, will periſh;—it will yield to time that conquers every thing, to corruption that moulders every thing. I wiſh to delay its diſſolution, and therefore I would add to its ſtrength by communicating its privileges. I would enlarge its circulation; I would invite property, talents, and ambition to act here, ſo that the ſphere of the conſtitution ſhould be the region of their activity. You have no objection to poverty, to dependency, to purchaſe, or even to bankruptcy.—Why not admit a portion of your country's ſtrength as well as its weakneſs.—The ſtrength you gain is the embrace; you muſt ſtrike your root to the center, if you mean to lift your forehead to the ſkies. Open the doors of your houſe, and ſhut the gates of controverſy, and throw on the image of Diſcord that chain which ſhe has thrown on your people. It ſeems, however, in ſome opinions, this is not the method to preſerve parliament, better to ſell the peerage and exclude the Catholic, and ſo reduce the ſenate to a ſynod of the orthodox, the champions of the miniſter, rather than the repreſentatives of the people. To preſerve the inſtitution of parliament it is propoſed to democratize, by excluſion, Catholic property, to democratize Catholic ariſtocracy, and thus maſs them all in one hoſt of exconſtitutionaliſts, and on that maſs to pour the chalice of invective and vituperation.

You complain of their meetings, you are the cauſe;—you ſend them out of doors, and when you find them in the ſtreet you are angry.—You are the founders of their Francis-ſtreet meetings, you are the author of their convention, you are the authors of the vehement language therein; 'twas the echo of your paſſion, and the reverberation of your own declamations. The Roman Catholic, far from being dangerous, has borne his teſtimony in favour of the inſtitution of the Iriſh parliament, for he has reſolved to relinquiſh his emancipation, rather than purchaſe his capacities by an union. He has ſaid, let the Catholic be free, but if his freedom is to be bought by the extinction of the Iriſh parliament, we wave the privilege, and pray for the parliament.

I beg

I beg to recur to the four heads of objection, the connection, the monarchy, the church, and the parliament; and I beg leave to lay it down as abſolutely and as broadly as language will permit—that theſe four objects are not endangered by Catholic emancipation, but, on the contrary, that they cannot be ſaved without it. That it is abſolutely neceſſary in theſe times for the connection, for the monarch, for the church, and for the parliament, that their exiſtences ſhall be rendered compatible with the privileges of the people.—The empire and the conſtitution are like the world, large enough for all their inhabitants, and all their eſtabliſhments.—The policy that excludes, is your ruin.—The bill that harmoniſes, your ſafety.—Before ſuch a conſideration, the difficulties of Honourable Gentlemen, the Real Preſence, the Virgin Mary, and the Pope, vaniſh.—Before ſuch a conſideration, the real difficulties, the quarrel of one miniſter with another miniſter, to diſplace whom the former deſtines 3,000,000 of men to everlaſting incapacities, do not vaniſh, but appear in the higheſt degree culpable and fatal.

It has been ſaid, that this queſtion was forced forward by the laſt adminiſtration.—I affirm, that it was not in the power of that adminiſtration to have kept it back. The mode in which it ſhould be brought forward was a ſubject in which the Catholics would have been directed by thoſe who ſupported them; but the bringing it forward was, in their minds, an unalterable determination.—I affirm it, their communication was touching the mode only, their determination was to bring forward the bill; which is an anſwer to that ſtuff which is written or ſaid, that Earl Fitzwilliam brought forward the Catholic queſtion.—No, we found the queſtion, and we ſupported it, becauſe it ought to have been ſupported.—It is ſaid the Catholics have had communication with a perſon, as their ſecretary, againſt whom in a late trial ſome intercourſe with Jackſon has appeared; but he was not their ſecretary when he had that communication; and I underſtand, on that trial it did appear as follows:—That this gentleman, among other reaſons for declining to go to France, ſaid, he would thereby loſe the money promiſed by the Catholics, by which it appears, from this teſtimony, that their mind was not diſpoſed to a French communication, but abhorrent to it.—Thus the circumſtance, if relevant at all to the queſtion, is an evidence in their favour.

Gentlemen have mentioned the conduct of the Catholics to the government.—May I be permitted to mention the conduct of the government to them, and I beg leave to call that conduct the hiſtory of proſcription.

In 1792, the religious war began; can we forget the attempt of government to divide the Catholic democracy from its ariſtocracy, and the people from their leaders, and the flock from the clergy;—their attempt to uſe the influence of the latter to defeat the claim of the former, and to pervert religion into an inſtrument againſt liberty?—Can we forget the paper war of that time carried on by government, where the ſcribes of the court, whoſe fortune was their falſehood, levelled their artillery againſt the people; and by paragraphs

graphs, and libels, and impudence, outraged the wounded feelings of the Catholic ſubject, and fed as they were by his taxes, turned aſſaſins of his character?—Do we forget the ſcornful rejection of the Catholic petition, and the ſad and miſerable grand jury war?—Don't we recollect the inſtructions ſent from the caſtle to their friends in the counties, to pledge Proteſtant againſt Catholic, on the queſtion of the elective franchiſe, and to make a conflict of paſſion, and a ſeparation of intereſt, by a perpetual circle drawn about the franchiſe, within which it was to be enchanted for ever?—Do we not remember a miniſter preſiding moſt improperly at one of thoſe meetings, to inflame, miſlead, and canker the mind of the Proteſtant?—Do we forget the order in favour of the Catholics from the throne,—the inſtant crouching to that order,—and then the return of the malice of the Iriſh court, and the bitterneſs of its proſecutions; the hive ſwarming forth again of hireling ſcriblers, againſt the characters, and the proſecutions againſt the lives, of the Catholics, for having petitioned for their liberty?—Do we forget theſe things? Where are the ears of your perjured witneſſes, and the miniſter's little manifeſto, hawked about the ſtreets of London and Dublin, as little to be relied on as thoſe witneſſes?—Have we not heard of the cloſet converſation, and the attempt to poiſon the mind of the king; the tampering with the corporation, and the endeavouring to exclude, by influence, thoſe whom the government took credit for having rendered admiſſible by law.

And now behold the growth of the cauſe under this courſe of perſecution:—They began with a diviſion among themſelves, and conclude with unanimity among themſelves and a diviſion among you: if that can becalled a diviſion, where the Proteſtants of a number of the counties, of all the great cities, and all the mercantile intereſt, have come to petition in their favour, and where nothing prevents the ſucceſs of the Catholic but the influence of the government.—The youth of the kingdom too, they who in a few years muſt determine this queſtion, they have decided for the emancipation, with a liberality which is natural to youth, and a ſagacity which is peculiar to years—and they will ſit ſoon in theſe ſeats, blended with Catholics, while we, blended with Catholics, ſhall repoſe in the duſt.—Another age ſhall laugh at all this,

"Her Juſtice bury what your pride has plan'd,
"And laughing freedom reaſſume the land."

In this general application for the Catholics there has been no application againſt them, nor city, nor county, nor grand jury, nor corporation has appeared againſt them, that of Dublin alone excepted.—Thus the Catholic emancipation ceaſes to be a queſtion between the Iriſh Proteſtant and Catholic, and is now a queſtion between the miniſters of another country and the people of Ireland. They advance—the Catholic deſcription of them—they advance from the wilderneſs, where, for an hundred years they have wandered, and they come laden with their families and their goods, whether

whether conducted by an inviſible hand, or by a cloudy pillar, or a guardian fire, and they deſire to be received into your hoſpitable conſtitution. Will the elders of the land come forth to greet them? Or will the Britiſh miniſtry ſend out their hornet to ſting them back again into the deſert? I mentioned that their claim was ſuſtained by a power above——look up——behold the balances of heaven——Pride in the ſcale againſt Juſtice——and Pride flies up and kicks the beam.

Col. STEWART ſaid this was a bill of power, not of rights, and was not a ground for any parliament to entertain. If the bill ſhould paſs, the King would be obliged to come forward, and demand a repeal of the coronation oath: for unleſs armed with power in both branches of the legiſlature, he could not ſupport the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment, as by the working of the conſtitution the royal negative was now laid aſide. He could not diſcover why the parliament of Ireland were more liberal than that of Great Britain. Certainly it was not that the Catholics there were not more reſpectable—No, it was becauſe the parliament in England knew that by touching this queſtion they would break the compact between the King and the people.—He doubted not whether it was not rather Proteſtant ambition than Proteſtant liberality which brought forward this buſineſs. Indeed the Proteſtant ſentiment could not appear for two months, during which time the viceroy was receiving addreſſes, and anſwering every addreſs by a pamphlet in favour of this meaſure. But the Proteſtant had ſpoken, and what effect did it produce? It appeared to him that the Catholics were never to be reconciled. Catholic favour was ſet up at auction, and however nigh one party might bid, the other went a ſtep higher. Speaking on the ſubject of the detected correſpondence of certain perſons with France, he ſaid he ſaw a union of Iriſhmen growing that would ruin the land; they were twiſting it to a band of ſtrength that would ſtrangle the conſtitution;—it was a French fraternity, and if the men of property did not awake, their property, their peace, and their conſtitution was gone.

Hon. F. HUTCHINSON ſaid a few words in ſupport of the bill.

Dr. DUIGENAN—ſtated the Catholic petitions. They all prayed, "That all penal and reſtrictive laws now affecting the Catholics of Ireland might be repealed, in conſideration of their loyalty to their ſovereign, their reſpect to the legiſlature, and dutiful and obedient ſubmiſſion to the laws."

The petition from Cavan, ſigned by a Romiſh prieſt, who in his ſignature ſtiles himſelf, "R. C. Biſhop of Kilmore."

The petition from Roſcommon ſigned by a Romiſh prieſt, in his ſignature ſtiling himſelf "Roman Catholic Biſhop of Elphin."

The petition from Galway ſigned by four Romiſh prieſts, in their ſignatures ſtiling themſelves reſpectively "Titular Archbiſhop of Tuam,

Tuam, Biſhop of Elphin, Biſhop of Kilmacduagh, and Biſhop of Clonfert."

The petition from Drogheda by a Romiſh prieſt, in his ſignature ſtiling himſelf, by initial letters only, "Roman Catholic Archbiſhop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland."

The petition from Newry by a Romiſh prieſt, ſtiling himſelf, "R. C. Biſhop of the dioceſe of Dromore."

The petition from Limerick by a Romiſh prieſt, ſtiling himſelf, "R. C. Biſhop of Limerick."

The petition from Longford by a Romiſh prieſt, ſtiling himſelf, "R. C. Biſhop of Ardagh."

The petition from Tipperary by a Romiſh prieſt, ſtiling himſelf in his ſignature, "Right Rev. Dr. Mc. Mahon, Biſhop of Killaloe."

Dr. Troy, titular archbiſhop of Dublin, in a pamphlet intitled, "Paſtoral Inſtructions addreſſed to the Roman Catholics of the arch dioceſe of Dublin, publiſhed in 1793, page 85, ſtates, that the Roman Catholic biſhops of Ireland act as ordinaries in their ſeveral dioceſes, and are appointed by, and act under the Pope's bulls.

The Romiſh prieſts above mentioned, ſigning themſelves Roman Catholic biſhops, and all the laity who ſigned theſe petitions with them, have, by ſuch ſignatures, openly avowed their contempt of, and diſobedience to the laws and the legiſlature, even at the very time they appear as petitioners to the houſe for a repeal of theſe laws, and contradict in the moſt audacious manner, the very ſubſtance of their petitions. They did not act ſo from ignorance of the laws, for they ſigned petitions to parliament in 1793, in the ſame manner; but their friends adviſed them to withdraw ſuch petitions, and preſent new petitions ſigned in a different manner, with which advice they then complied. And theſe Romiſh biſhops, particularly of Elphin, openly exerciſe eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, diſſolving marriages by ſentences, and executing judicial inſtruments under epiſcopal ſeals, and ſigning ſuch inſtruments as biſhops.

The laws thus violated are the following:—Act of 16th of Richard II. called the ſtatute of proviſoes, puniſhment, præmunire. Act of the 2d Elizabeth, ch. 1. ſect. 12. puniſhment for the firſt offence, forfeiture of goods, and a year's impriſonment: puniſhment of a ſecond offence, præmunire; of a third offence, that of high treaſon.

Act of the 9th William III. chap. 1. ſect. 1. puniſhment perpetual exile; returning to the kingdom, puniſhed as traitors.

Act of the 21ſt and 22d of George III. chap. 16. ſect. 6. puniſhment the ſame with thoſe recited.

The other conſideration in their petition, on the ſcore of which, they pray a repeal of all penal and reſtrictive laws, affecting the Roman Catholics of Ireland, is their loyalty to their ſovereign. This is to be examined.

Omitting former inſtances of the diſloyalty of Roman Catholics, I come to their preſent proceedings.—The Roman Catholics of

of the city of Dublin, met the 23d of December laſt, appointed a committee of nine perſons, who drew up the petition of the catholics of the city of Dublin, now before the houſe, which was approved by the whole aſſembly: they at the ſame time agreed to requeſt all the Roman Catholics of the nation to prepare ſimilar petitions, and preſent them to the houſe. This requeſt was immediately complied with by the Roman Catholics in every county, city, and borough throughout the kingdom.

Some of the catholic nobility and gentry of ancient families throughout the kingdom, (the whole of which body are ſo few in number, that ſuch of them as have any conſiderable property do not amount to forty throughout the nation) had diſapproved of many proceedings of the Roman Catholics of Dublin heretofore, and had withdrawn from their aſſemblies, and Earl Fitzwilliam ſtates in a letter written by him to Lord Carliſle, and publiſhed as a pamphlet, that he, entertaining ſome doubts whether the petitioning Roman Catholics of Dublin, and their committee of nine, ſpoke the ſenſe of the Roman Catholics of the kingdom at large, ſent for ſome of the chiefs of the catholic nobility and gentry, whom he ſtiles *Seceders*, and aſked them, whether they agreed in ſentiment with the Roman Catholic Aſſembly of Dublin and their committee of nine? and that they aſſured him, they were in perfect union with the aſſembly of Dublin and their committee of nine, and that ſuch aſſembly and committee were duly authoriſed to ſpeak the ſenſe of all the Roman Catholics of the kingdom; and that they were willing that Mr. Edward Byrne, the chairman of that aſſembly and committee, ſhould take the lead in all buſineſs reſpecting the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Hence it is plain, that the Roman Catholic Aſſembly of Dublin, and its committee of nine, do declare the ſenſe and opinions of all the catholics of Ireland. This aſſembly met at a Romiſh chapel in Francis-ſtreet in the city of Dublin, on the 9th of April laſt, and at this aſſembly ſeveral moſt traiterous and ſeditious ſpeeches were publicly pronounced, four of them, by four members of the committee of nine; and a fifth, by a nephew of one of the committee who happened to be then ſick; in which they moſt traiterouſly endeavoured to incite and encourage all Iriſh ſoldiers and ſailors in his Majeſty's armies and fleets to deſert their colours: openly declared, that the war we are engaged in againſt the French was, on our part, and the part of our allies, an *impious coalition* againſt liberty: expreſſed their joy at all diſaſters that befel our armies and fleets, and the higheſt exultation that the armies of the confederated deſpots (as they ſtiled his Majeſty and his allies,) were flying before the ſoldiers of liberty: aſſerted, that all victories obtained by his Majeſty's armies and the fleets were public calamities to Ireland, and that Iriſhmen ought to weep for them; that Ireland was ruined by her connection with Great Britain; that they would hereafter never make any application to a Britiſh miniſtry, nor have any connection with them; that they would ſupport a *radical Reform* in the Houſe of Commons; and, that this nation could

never

never be happy, 'till its government was changed into a republic, independant of Great-Britain! At the ſame time, magnifying their own power and riches in the moſt vaunting and ſeducing manner to the multitude; theſe ſpeeches they publiſhed in all the Popiſh newſpapers, that is, in the newſpapers publiſhed in Dublin, the patronage of all which they have purchaſed, two excepted. The aſſembly then entered into certain reſolutions, which they have alſo publiſhed, in one of which they *reſpectfully thank Theobald Wolfe Tone, Eſq; their agent, for his important ſervices to the Catholic body, which no gratitude can over-rate, and no remuneration can over-pay.* In another, they reſolve, that the Right Hon. Henry Grattan be requeſted to introduce the catholic bill immediately into Parliament:—and, in another, they reſolve to raiſe money by a ſpeedy and liberal ſubſcription throughout the kingdom, under pretence of defraying the expences of their preſent application to Parliament, but in reality to ſupport internal inſurrections and rebellion.—[Here the Doctor read ſeveral extracts from the ſpeeches and reſolutions at Francis-ſtreet chapel on the 9th of April laſt.]—He then ſtated to the houſe who Mr. Tone is, on whom the catholic aſſembly beſtow ſuch laviſh praiſes: Stated the tryal and conviction of the Rev. Mr. Jackſon, a French ſpy and agent, for high treaſon. On this tryal it appeared, that *Tone* was to be appointed an agent by certain conſpirators and traitors in this kingdom, (one of which is nephew to one of the committee of nine) to go to the French Convention, and to ſolicit an invaſion of this kingdom by the French; that he had drawn up a ſtate of Ireland to be laid before the French Convention, and that he attended at ſeveral meetings of the conſpirators, at one of which he read the aforeſaid paper to the conſpirators. This paper ſtated, that the people of Ireland were divided into three claſſes.—1ſt, *Proteſtants* of the eſtabliſhed church, the feweſt in number, but who had almoſt the whole landed property in the nation, and were in poſſeſſion of the whole patronage of the country eccleſiaſtical and civil; that theſe were all ariſtocrats, adverſe to any revolution, and attached to England. 2d claſs, *Diſſenters*, all republicans and enthuſiaſtic admirers of the French Revolution. 3d, *Catholics*, the bulk of the people, almoſt the whole peaſantry of the country, in the loweſt degree of miſery and ignorance, ready for any change, becauſe no change can make them worſe: that the name of England and her power was univerſally odious to this third claſs, they are enemies to England from their hatred to the Engliſh name: they are in a ſemi-barbarous ſtate, of all others the beſt adapted for making war. That there is no doubt but an invaſion with a ſufficient force would be ſupported by the Catholics, *from their hatred of the Engliſh name*, reſulting from the tyranny of near ſeven centuries. This paper further ſtrongly enforces an invaſion of Ireland, rather than of Great Britain by the French. The tryal and conviction of Jackſon was on the 23d of April laſt, it appeared that *Tone* was one of the conſpirators, and drew up the paper in April 1794, a year before the tryal; and it appears from the

the reſolutions of the Roman Catholic Aſſembly on the 9th of April laſt, about a fortnight before the tryal, that *Tone* who is by profeſſion a barriſter, is and has been for ſome years paſt the confidential agent of the Catholics of Ireland, and muſt be ſuppoſed well to know the ſentiments of that body in political matters; he is alſo the author of a pamphlet, called the Northern Whig, publiſhed about three years ago, propoſing and recommending a coalition between the proteſtant diſſenters and the catholics, for the purpoſe of pulling down the preſent eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate, and forming a republican government in this kingdom, ſeparated from, and independent of Great Britain. All theſe circumſtances connected with the publication of the traiterous and ſeditious proceedings of the Roman Catholic aſſembly at Francis-ſtreet chapel on the 9th of April laſt, the avowed organ and repreſentative of the whole catholics of Ireland, plainly ſhew, that the general body of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, have no pretenſions to loyalty, and that their petition in that reſpect, is an acknowledged falſehood. So much for their pretended loyalty, reſpect for the legiſlature, and dutiful and obedient ſubmiſſion to the laws of the Iriſh Roman Catholics. Some Roman Catholics of ancient families, and who have preſerved parts of their eſtates amidſt the former bloody convulſions of this country, are well known to be of different political ſentiments from the bulk of the Iriſh Roman Catholics as above ſtated; to be men of honour, and as faithful ſubjects of his majeſty, as the tenets of their religion will ſuffer them to be to a proteſtant prince; but as before ſtated, the number of that claſs is inconſiderable, any bill framed for the political aggrandizement of a body of people entertaining ſuch deteſtable and traiterous political ſentiments as already ſtated, ought to be rejected with the utmoſt contempt by this houſe.

Proper to inquire, whether Roman Catholics, from the avowed principles of their religion, are entitled to be put on an equality with Proteſtants, in a Proteſtant ſtate, in reſpect to political power, the avowed principle and purpoſe of the preſent bill?—Roman Catholics abſolutely deny the ſupremacy of the King and ſtate in all eccleſiaſtical concerns, and obſtinately refuſe to take the oath ſubſtituted for the oath of ſupremacy (preſcribed to be taken by the Iriſh act of the ſecond of Elizabeth) by the Engliſh act of the third and fourth of William and Mary; "That no foreign prince, pre-"late, ſtate, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any juriſdic-"tion, power, ſuperiority, pre-eminence or authority, eccleſiaſti-"cal or ſpiritual, within this realm."—At the time this act of William and Mary paſſed in England, it was the received law of Ireland, that Ireland was bound by the acts paſſed in the Britiſh parliament, when Ireland was particularly named in them; and this oath was accordingly taken in Ireland by virtue of that Engliſh ſtatute, by all perſons who were thereby enjoined to take it, and particularly by all the members of the Iriſh parliament, which met in Ireland in the fourth year of William and

Mary, as appears by the Journals of the Houſe of Commons. When Great Britain, in the year 1782, relinquiſhed her ancient right of binding Ireland by Britiſh ſtatutes, this oath was preſcribed to be taken in Ireland by the ſame perſons who were obliged to take it before that time under the Britiſh act, by the Iriſh act of the 21ſt and 22d of his preſent Majeſty, uſually called Yelverton's act.—It has been often aſſerted, both in this houſe and out of it, that the Iriſh conſtitution owes its very birth and origin to the famous year 1782: yet, if this bill paſſes, that oath, in reſpect to Roman Catholics is to be aboliſhed, and that boaſted conſtitution of 1782 is to receive a mortal wound.—Roman Catholics not only refuſe to take the aforeſaid oath, but roundly aſſert that the Pope, a foreign prince and prelate, is entitled to exerciſe ſupreme eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction within this realm; that he is guardian and ſole expounder of the canons, and all eccleſiaſtical laws; that he, *proprio jure*, may make or diſpenſe with all laws of this kingdom relating to eccleſiaſtical matters; that *appeals* from all eccleſiaſtical courts in this kingdom lie to his ſupreme tribunal; that he is Chriſt's vicar on earth: the ſupreme viſible head of the church on earth. Roman Catholics profeſs themſelves ready to ſwear, that the Pope has not any *temporal* juriſdiction within this realm, either directly or indirectly: but ſuch oath cannot be kept by any Roman Catholic who holds the above doctrine of the ſupremacy of the Pope in ſpirituals, becauſe a great degree of temporal power and juriſdiction in a State, is annexed and inſeparably united to the ſupreme juriſdiction in ſpirituals, and interwoven with it; for inſtance, the validity of marriage is a matter of pure ſpiritual cognizance, and muſt be pronounced on by eccleſiaſtical courts, from which all Roman Catholics believe that an appeal lies to the Pope; on the validity of marriage depend the temporal rights of inheritance, of dower, of alimony, of ſeparation, of divorce, of liability to a wife's debts, of adminiſtration of intеſtate's effects; nay, even the very right of ſucceſſion to the crown may depend on it. Excommunication is a ſpiritual cenſure, yet it involves many temporal rights; and a thouſand other inſtances of indiſſoluble connection of temporal power and juriſdiction to the ſupreme eccleſiaſtical authority and juriſdiction, might be given; a ſubject therefore, who denies to the ſtate the ſupremacy in eccleſiaſtical matters, denies nearly one half of the legiſlative and executive authority of the ſtate.

The Doctor referred to the authority of Sir John Davis, in his ſpeech on the oath of ſupremacy, delivered in the council chamber in Ireland in the reign of King James the Firſt; that great lawyer ſtates, "That as all the cauſes that riſe within this kingdom, be "either eccleſiaſtical or civil, the King muſt have power and ju- "riſdiction to decide and determine, as well the one as the other, "or elſe he ſhall be but half a King within his own kingdom, as "having juriſdiction but in half the cauſes ſo as his people muſt "be fain to appeal to ſome foreign power, to beg judgment and "right in thoſe cauſes."—What is the notorious effect of ſuch doctrine?

trine? The ſubjecting of this kingdom, in reſpect to one-half of its legiſlative and executive power, to a foreign prince; which is a crime, according to Locke, if committed by the Sovereign or legiſlative power, to be puniſhed by depoſition. Locke's words are, "The delivery of the people into the ſubjection of a foreign power; either by the prince or the legiſlature, is certainly a change "of the legiſlative, and ſo a diſſolution of the government; for "the end why people entered into ſociety, being to be preſerved "one, entire, free, independent ſociety, to be governed by its own "laws; this is loſt whenever they are given up into the power of "another."—Roman Catholics holding ſuch doctrine cannot be made, with any degree of prudence, legiſlators, chancellors, and judges, as this bill purpoſes to make them. The Iriſh Roman Catholics are more attached to this foreign juriſdiction than the Engliſh Roman Catholics. In the reign of Henry II. (for the conſtitutions of Clarendon,) the ſubject of contention between Henry and Becket, forbid the exerciſe of the papal juriſdiction in England, yet they were enacted by the Parliament of England, then all catholics. This wiſe prince would not have conteſted this point with ſo much zeal, if the power claimed by the Pope in ſpirituals, did not trench on his temporal power.—It has been attempted to turn the argument of the danger of the Pope's ſupremacy in ſpirituals into ridicule, by a right hon. baronet, a firſt-rate wit in this houſe, by his aſking, does any man in his ſenſes now dread the power of the Pope, a poor petty ſovereign, who owes his ſafety to the protection of a regiment of Engliſh dragoons? To this it may be anſwered with great truth, that it is perfectly immaterial in what perſon—whether a prince or a beggar—the Roman Catholics ſuppoſe the ſupremacy to be lodged, as they aſſert that it is not lodged in the ſtate: becauſe the danger to be apprehended from ſo pernicious a tenet, ariſes from the numbers and power of the perſons in the nation who hold it, and not from the power of the perſons they ſuppoſe to be inveſted with it. As the danger to the ſtate, when there was a pretender to the crown, aroſe, not from the power of the pretender, a poor baniſhed prince, without territory or revenue, but from the number and power of his adherents in this country.—The right hon. Baronet pilfered this joke from the famous Romiſh agent in England, who has publiſhed his own jeſuitical letter to the Baronet, in which this piece of wit will be found by any perſon who will give himſelf the trouble of reading it.—No ſect of people, denying the ſupremacy of the ſtate in one-half of its legiſlative and executive authority, can with any propriety be put on a level of political power, with thoſe who admit in the fulleſt manner the ſupremacy of the ſtate, as well in eccleſiaſtical matters as in temporal.——A ſecond avowed principle of Roman Catholics, which prevents a full communication of political power in the ſtate with them, and will be an eternal cauſe of ſeparation between them and Proteſtants, is that uncharitable tenet of excluſive ſalvation. The Romiſh church holds chriſtians who differ from the church of Rome in re-

ligious opinions, cannot obtain ſalvation in the next world.—
—This uncharitable opinion tends ſtrongly to render Roman Catholics irreconcileable enemies to Proteſtants; how can real amity ſubſiſt between them, when the Roman Catholic believes his proteſtant neighbour to be a living tabernacle for the devil, and that his ſpirit, immediately on its ſeparation from the body, deſcends to hell, and is doomed to eternal miſery? Some Roman Catholics revolt from this dreadful doctrine, becauſe their natural good ſenſe and benevolence overcome their religious prejudices; but the bulk of them hold the tenet, and it is carefully inculcated by their clergy. 'Tis a cruel and unchriſtian doctrine, and calculated for eternal diſcord and ſeparation. Dr. Troy endeavours to juſtify it, by aſſerting that the proteſtant church alſo holds the tenet of excluſive ſalvation; his reaſoning, and arguments on this point are ſophiſtical; from his own arguments and quotations it is plain, that the proteſtant church, as the truth is, allows that all chriſtians, of whatever ſect or perſuaſion, may be ſaved; but the Romiſh church excludes all chriſtians, thoſe of their own communion excepted, from ſalvation.—Dr. Troy takes great pains to prove that Roman Catholics do not, and ought not to abjure the infallibility of the Pope; the oath they take in that reſpect is, "That it is not an article of the catholic faith, neither am I thereby required to believe or profeſs, that the Pope is infallible." He obſerves, that all they ſwear is, that the Pope's infallibility is not an article of faith, but that they are left at liberty to believe it if they think fit; and he praiſes the Engliſh Roman Catholics for rejecting the form of an oath, a few years ago, which preciſely ſtated, that they did not believe the Pope to be infallible; and then he ſtates, that the decrees of the Pope, *Ex Cathedrâ*, are completely deciſive and infallible, when acquieſced in by the majority of biſhops; that is, that they are now completely deciſive and infallible, becauſe the acquieſcence or diſſent of the majority of biſhops cannot now be even collected, as it is next to impoſſible that any general council will ever be again aſſembled in chriſtendom, in which alone the acquieſcence or diſſent of the majority of biſhops could be collected. Here then is the infallibility of the Pope avowed to be a principle of the Roman Catholics, notwithſtanding the ſhuffling oath they take in that reſpect. This is a dangerous doctrine, and ought to exclude the maintainers of it from an equality of political power with proteſtants in a proteſtant ſtate. What influence can the obligation of an oath have with perſons who believe this infallibility? for if the Pope ſhall pronounce and decree, *Ex Cathedrâ*, or officially as Pope, that the oath is unlawful in itſelf, and does not bind, the ſwearer believing in his infallibility, muſt alſo believe that he is looſed from the obligation of his oath, and that he does not ſtand in need of any diſpenſation whatſoever for that purpoſe. See a notable inſtance of this method of freeing Roman Catholics from the obligation of oaths, in the Biſhop of Cloyne's preſent ſtate of the church of Ireland, page 21, where he ſtates the letter of Cardi-

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pal Ghilini, the Pope's nuncio at Bruſſels, the cardinal protector of Ireland, ſo late as the year 1768. It is ſtated by the favourers of this bill, that the proteſtants as well as the Roman Catholics of Ireland, are anxious that it ſhould paſs into a law; that the city of Dublin has petitioned the crown in favour of it, and that ſeveral aſſemblies in different counties in the kingdom, compoſed of proteſtants and Roman Catholics, have alſo petitioned the king and this houſe in favour of it. Nothing can be more unfounded than the aſſertion, that the proteſtants of Ireland of the church eſtabliſhed, are favourers of this bill. The proteſtant corporation of the city of Dublin petitioned the king againſt the principle of it, and prayed his protection for the proteſtant eſtabliſhment in Ireland. A few ſectaries in the city of Dublin, improperly enough ſtiled proteſtants, met and agreed on petitions to the crown in favour of the bill: at one of thoſe meetings, at which thirteen attended, they ſtiled themſelves the merchants of the city of Dublin, Mr. Abraham Wilkinſon, an anabaptiſt, preſided, and was ſupported by Mr. Joſhua Pim, a quaker, and Mr. James Hartley, a diſſenter; theſe three gentlemen are certainly men of reſpectable characters in the mercantile line, and have made fortunes with unblemiſhed reputations: but it muſt not be conceded, that they and the few perſons of their own republican faction that aſſembled with them, ſpoke the ſenſe of the proteſtant merchants of the city of Dublin. Another aſſembly, called an aggregate meeting, was convened in Dublin; theſe aggregate meetings are a late invention of the republican faction in this kingdom: a few bell-wethers of that flock meet together, and if one of their faction happens to be a ſheriff or a magiſtrate, as is ſometimes the caſe, they draw up what they ſtile a requiſition to him, to aſſemble forthwith the whole gang by public advertiſement. As this faction is in general compoſed of the meaneſt, the pooreſt, and moſt deſperate of the community, all levellers, no perſon ventures into an aſſembly thus convened, who has any regard for his purſe or his throat. When ſuch an aſſembly meets, one of the captains of the gang pulls a ſtring of ſeditious reſolutions or a factious petition out of his pocket, reads them to his confederates; they are inſtantly adopted, ſigned by the captain, and publiſhed with great induſtry throughout the kingdom, by the factious newſpapers. Mr. Alderman Howiſon, a diſſenter, lately called an aggregate meeting in this city; a petition was there produced, read, and adopted by the aſſembly, purporting to be a petition to his majeſty in favour of the Roman Catholic claims, and the aſſembly then came to a reſolution of deputing Mr. Alderman Howiſon and another gentleman, a diſſenter, as their ambaſſadors to preſent this petition to his majeſty; the aſſembly conſiſted of ninety perſons, and the petition was afterwards ſent about the town to all republicans to ſign it, by which means they procured about 500 ſignatures to it, and the ambaſſadors carried it to London, and preſented it to his majeſty at levee. To give ſome idea of the republican principles of this aſſembly, and the rank of its component parts, the principal orator at it was a man of the name of Willis,

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by trade a maker of leather breeches: this man, at a ſheriff's entertainment about a year ago, given by Mr. Sheriff Giffard, refuſed to drink the king's health, at which the company was ſo enraged, that they filled a large glaſs with the drainings of the bottles, compelled the breeches-maker to drink it off to the king's health on his knees, and then turned him out of the room.* Mr. Howiſon a few years ago, was by the intrigues of a republican faction, at that time headed by Mr. James Napper Tandy, elected Lord Mayor of the city of Dublin, in prejudice to a moſt reſpectable alderman, Mr. James, whoſe turn it then was to fill that office, and which he has ſince filled greatly to the honour of the city and his own credit. (Alderman James, is brother-in-law to alderman Howiſon.) One Cooney, the editor of a factious newſpaper ſtiled the Morning Poſt, (who is now ſuffering impriſonment in Newgate, being convicted of publiſhing ſeveral falſe, malicious, and ſeditious libels), was, previous to the mayoralty of alderman Howiſon, convicted of publiſhing a moſt ſcurrilous and malicious libel againſt our queen, the pattern of all that is good and great, the beſt of wives, the beſt of mothers, and the ornament of her court and kingdom; for this offence Cooney was ſentenced to be impriſoned and pillored, at the expiration of the term of his impriſonment; he ſuffered the puniſhment, and lord mayor Howiſon, having an official dinner at the Manſion-houſe, in a day or two after Cooney was liberated from his impriſonment and the pillory, invited Cooney to this dinner, and he was placed at this entertainment next the firſt nobility of the kingdom, though he had publicly ſtood in the pillory a few days before in College-green. It cannot be admitted that this bear-garden of republican diſſenters, ſpoke the ſenſe of the proteſtants of Dublin. In the county of Cork fourteen perſons aſſembled, ſix only of them freeholders of that county, and entered into reſolutions favourable to the catholic claims, and to this bill, and ſtiling themſelves the freeholders of the county of Cork, ſent up their reſolutions to Lord Kingſborough, one of the repreſentatives of the county in parliament, as inſtructions to him how to vote on the bill. His anſwer to theſe perſons is remarkable for its ſpirit and propriety; he has ſpoken againſt the bill, and has declared that he will vote againſt it, notwithſtanding theſe pretended inſtructions of freeholders. The ſame political legerdemain has been played by the republican faction in ſeveral other counties.

The numbers and power of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, have been exaggerated by the patrons of this bill, not only beyond reality, but probability; and ſuch exaggerated accounts have been carried over to the Engliſh miniſtry, and have had conſiderable effect. As to numbers, the Roman Catholics of Ireland do not exceed

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* *The Editor of this Report, whilſt he faithfully details the Hon. Member's ſpeech, deems it juſt to ſay, that ſeveral of the perſonal alluſions in the courſe of it, have been publickly contradicted in the moſt ſolemn manner.*

ceed the Proteſtants in a greater proportion, than that of two and a half to one; ſuch was the proportion by a very accurate account of the number of the inhabitants of this kingdom, made in the year 1732; the whole inhabitants of this kingdom then amounted to ſomething leſs than two millions. The number of inhabitants has certainly ſince increaſed, but it is highly improbable that they amount now to four millions, that is, that the population of this country has been more than double in ſixty years. The accuracy of the modern calculators of population is much to be ſuſpected: Mr. Chalmers, in a late tract, has proved to demonſtration, that the calculations of Doctor Price, as to population in England, are groſsly erroneous; the ſurface of Great Britain is to that of Ireland, in the proportion of three and a half to one; if then Ireland contains four millions of inhabitants, as modern calculators aſſert, Great Britain, which to a traveller appears to be much better peopled, muſt contain upwards of fourteen millions, which is much more than the inhabitants of Britain are uſually calculated at. But ſuppoſing Ireland now to contain four millions of inhabitants, it is certain that the proportion above mentioned of catholics to proteſtants in 1732, muſt be rather diminiſhed from many cauſes in this year, (1795) in favour of proteſtants; and that as the ſtrength of the diſſenting intereſt in Ireland, is confined to four counties only, in which four counties the proteſtants of the eſtabliſhed church are at leaſt as numerous as the diſſenters, it follows, that the great body of the proteſtants of Ireland, are proteſtants of the eſtabliſhed church: it is alſo equally certain, that much the greater number of the proteſtant diſſenters of Ireland are good and faithful ſubjects of his majeſty, and well attached to the conſtitution; and that the republicans amongſt them are not ſo numerous as generally imagined, but that their turbulence makes them appear to be more numerous than they are in reality. As to the power of the Roman Catholics in the ſtate, that muſt be eſtimated not ſo much from their numbers, as from their landed eſtates and perſonal property. The landed eſtates in the hands of proteſtants in Ireland, are to thoſe in the hands of Roman Catholics, in the proportion of fifty to one; and, the catholic agent, Mr. Tone, may be believed, when he ſtates that the peaſantry are moſtly catholics, and the pooreſt and moſt wretched in Europe: what perſonal property there is lodged in the hands of Roman Catholics, is confined to merchants and traders of that profeſſion in cities and towns; and they certainly are not poſſeſſed of the twentieth part of the perſonal property of the nation. To convince gentlemen of this truth, let it be remembered, that a few years ago, a national bank was eſtabliſhed in this kingdom, a ſum of 600,000l. was the capital: the Roman Catholics of Ireland, (though very ambitious of becoming directors of this bank,) were only able to ſubſcribe ſixty thouſand pounds of the capital among them all; the reſt was ſubſcribed by proteſtants! Away then with theſe fallacious boaſtings of the wealth and power of Iriſh Roman Catholics! 'Tis one of the arts practiſed by the patrons of this bill in this houſe, to endeavour to intimidate proteſtants by prophecies

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and forebodings of dreadful wars, tumults and maſſacres, which they are conſtantly trumpeting forth, as the certain conſequences of the rejection of this bill. When I ſee a gentleman, equal as an actor to Garrick, Barry or Sheridan, get up in this houſe, with all the well-diſſembled marks of horror and diſmay in his countenance, his hair ſtanding at end, and hear him conjuring up the hideous ſprites of battle, murder, and ſudden death, as conſequences of rejection, in ſolemn tones from the loweſt key of his voice, as if he was encloſed in a hogſhead and ſpeaking through the bung-hole—though I admire his ability in acting, yet, as I am no way diſmayed by the unſubſtantial goblins, my great reſpect for this houſe alone reſtrains me, from ſinging to him the nurſe's ſong.

" Get away Raw-head and Bloody-bones!
" Here is a child does not fear you."

It has been argued, that the Parliament of this kingdom has already conferred on Roman Catholics the elective franchiſe; that acquiſition of the repreſentative franchiſe, is the certain conſequence of the poſſeſſion of the elective; and that therefore it is abſurd to reject the bill, and refuſe now the repreſentative franchiſe to the Roman Catholics, which they will certainly ſoon acquire. How does it appear, that the acquiſition of the repreſentative franchiſe is the certain conſequence of the acquiſition of the elective?—Experience proves the contrary. No man can poſſeſs the repreſentative franchiſe in England, who has not a clear unincumbered eſtate of 300l. per annum, which entitles him to ſit in Parliament as member for a borough; or 600l. per annum, which entitles him to ſit in Parliament for a county; yet, the great majority of thoſe perſons in England, who enjoy the elective franchiſe, are excluded from the repreſentative franchiſe, becauſe they have not eſtates of 300l. per annum, nor of 600l. per annum. The enjoyment of the repreſentative franchiſe by Roman Catholics in Ireland, would ſubvert the conſtitution; and if it were true, that the enjoyment of the repreſentative franchiſe is a certain conſequence of the enjoyment of the elective, the argument of the patrons of this bill would only prove, that we ought inſtantly to deprive the Roman Catholics of the elective franchiſe, for the preſervation of the conſtitution in church and ſtate. This bill if paſſed into a law would not content the Roman Catholics, for they pray the repeal of all reſtrictive and penal laws, affecting them particularly; which this bill if paſſed into a law would not effect; though it is fully competent to the ſubverſion of the conſtitution. The Roman Catholics have been called upon by the republican faction to make their preſent demands: that reſtleſs faction ſaw they were too weak to carry on their deſign of eſtabliſhing in this kingdom a democratic republic on the French ſcheme, without the aſſiſtance of the bulk of the people; they have therefore called into their aid the Roman Catholics, by offering to them the ſubverſion of the conſtitution in church and ſtate, founded in the 2d year of

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Queen Elizabeth, revived and ſtrengthened by new barriers at the Reſtoration, improved, and renovated, and again eſtabliſhed at the Revolution, again ſtrengthened and fortified in the year 1782, the glorious æra, as the patrons of the bill ſay, of the enfranchiſement of Ireland. The Roman Catholics have attentively liſtened to the call, and zealouſly embraced the offer; that they are now completely republicans and democrats, ſee all their late publications; the Stewart race, to which they were attached as monarchs, are extinct, and they mortally hate an Engliſh government, and the houſe of Brunſwick. If you capacitate Roman Catholics to enjoy all the great offices of the ſtate, and to ſit in Parliament by paſſing this bill, what is called by the republican faction a reform in Parliament, muſt be the immediate conſequence, becauſe as the repreſentation of all counties, potwallopping boroughs, cities, and towns, where the election is popular, will be open to catholic ambition, catholics will become natural enemies to all cloſe boroughs from which they will be in general excluded; they will therefore more ſtrongly unite themſelves with the republican party, and inſiſt on the deſtruction of theſe boroughs, and the diviſion of the kingdom into departments like France: if you confeſs, by paſſing the preſent bill, that you cannot and dare not reſiſt their preſent demands, how will you be able to reſiſt their demand of a reform, when their ſtrength and influence will be increaſed ten-fold, and when their intereſt will draw ſtill cloſer the bands of confederacy between them and the republicans? All ariſtocratic influence will be then baniſhed from this Houſe, it will become a mere democratic aſſembly, and the more catholic the more democratic. Then adieu to all eſtabliſhment; church and ſtate will vaniſh before them, an immediate attempt to turn this monarchical government into a republic under the protection of France, and ſevered from the Britiſh empire, will be the conſequence. This nation will become a field of battle for the Britiſh and the French, as Sicily formerly for the Romans and the Carthaginians; miſery and deſolation will overwhelm the country like a deluge, and ſweep away Proteſtant and Roman Catholic in one common ruin: Britain, as heretofore, muſt, from the geographical ſituation of the country, prove victorious, and experience will teach her the neceſſity of uniting this country for ever to the Britiſh empire, which ſhe, fatally for her own and our happineſs, neglected to do at the revolution, when ſhe had it in her power. If this bill ſhould paſs this Houſe and the Peers, it is impoſſible that the King could give the royal aſſent to it. Part of the King's coronation oath, ſettled at the revolution, is as follows: "I will to the utmoſt of my power, maintain the Proteſtant religion as by law eſtabliſhed, and preſerve to the biſhops and clergy, and to the churches committed to their care, all ſuch rights and privileges, as by law do, or ſhall, appertain to them or any of them." This oath has conſiderable additions made to it by the act of Union between England and Scotland in the reign of Queen Anne. That act enacts as follows, "that all acts then in force for the eſtabliſhment and preſervation of the

"church

" church of England, and the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and
" government thereof, ſhall be in force for *ever*. That every King
" or Queen, at his or her coronation, ſhall take and ſubſcribe an
" oath to maintain and preſerve inviolably the ſaid ſettlement of
" the church of England, and the doctrine, diſcipline, and go-
" vernment thereof, as by law eſtabliſhed, within the kingdoms of
" England and Ireland, the dominion of Wales, and the town of
" Berwick, and the territories thereunto belonging. That this
" act ſhall for ever be a fundamental and eſſential part of the
" treaty of union between England and Scotland." I have al-
ready ſhewn, that the bill, if paſſed into a law, would not only ſubvert the civil conſtitution, but that it would alſo ſubvert the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment; and that therefore his Majeſty, a moſt religious pious prince, could not conſiſtent with the obligation of his coronation oath, give his royal aſſent to ſuch a bill. It has been argued, that the royal veto is now extinguiſhed by diſuſe, and that the King is, by the conſtitution of the kingdom, obliged to give his royal aſſent to any act which has been approved of by the houſes of Lords and Commons; and that if the houſes of Lords and Commons ſhould agree upon an act for aboliſhing the Proteſtant religion, or even chriſtianity itſelf, the King would be obliged to give the royal aſſent to the act, and that his doing ſo, would be no breach of his oath. This argument is pilfered alſo from the letter of the Romiſh agent in England to a right hon. baronet already mentioned, but he uſes it in a more diſguiſed and Jeſuitical manner than it is ſtated in this Houſe. Little credit is due to the arguments of this Romiſh agent: during the American war, he conſtantly preached up in Parliament the moſt violent republican doctrines; when it pleaſed God to afflict his Majeſty with a moſt grievous malady, to the great grief of all his faithful ſubjects, this man was impious enough to declare in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, that God Almighty had *hurled* his Majeſty from his throne; as it was aſſerted in the Engliſh and Iriſh papers of that day. Upon the deſtruction of chriſtianity in France he changed his opinions, and wrote violently againſt the French democrats, for doing the ſame things which he had ſo often, and with ſuch energy, commanded, when performed by the American Republicans. The reaſon is plain—the Americans then ſtood in need of the aſſiſtance of the French, who at that time profeſſed the Roman Catholic religion; the Americans therefore favoured the Roman Catholic religion, but the French, in their late revolution, proſcribed all chriſtianity; conſequently the Roman Catholic religion, which this agent ſtiles pulling down the *Majeſty of Religion*. Hence *illæ lachrymæ* of that gentleman, and hence his recantation of republicaniſm. This argument to prove that his Majeſty may at any time violate his coronation oath, both in premiſes and concluſion, may be fairly denied; either or both houſes of Parliament cannot diſpenſe with the obligation of his Majeſty's oath; it was never before aſſerted that they would aſſume the pretended power of the Pope of Rome, of abſolving from the obligation of oaths, neither

ther can it be conceded that his Majeſty's veto is gone by diſuſe. A caſe may be however put further, to ſhow the abſurdity of the argument: By Iriſh acts of Parliament unrepealed, the kingdom of Ireland is declared to be for ever annexed to and dependant upon the Imperial crown of England, and that whoever is King of England becomes thereby *ipſo facto* King of Ireland. If a bill was to paſs both houſes of Parliament in Ireland for aboliſhing the Proteſtant religion, and for eſtabliſhing the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland, could his Majeſty, conſiſtent with the coronation oath taken by him in England, purſuant to the act of union, give the royal aſſent to ſuch bill whilſt the act of union remained in full force in Great Britain? The Romiſh agent in England will ſcarce aſſert that he could.—The Doctor concluded his long ſpeech with a declaration, that he would vote for the rejection of the bill.

Mr. G. PONSONBY ſaid, that ſenſible as he was that at ſuch an hour the houſe was too much fatigued to hear him, and himſelf too much fatigued to ſay any thing worth their hearing, he would be very ſhort; ſome things, however, had come out in debate, which made it neceſſary for him to ſay a few words. With reſpect to the hon. and learned gentleman (Dr. Duigenan), he entertained for him the greateſt eſteem, and though he entirely diſſented from all his opinions, yet conſcious that they were the reſult of conviction, he reſpected them. The hon. gentleman had certainly brought his mind into a very odd ſtate, for he now believed things much more ſtrange than even the Catholics believed. On thoſe men he charged tenets, which not only no Catholic, but no rational being could entartain. He could aſſure the hon. gentleman that he need not fly from the Catholics—for he could aſſure him they did not think he will be damned for not being a Catholic.—Even Dr. Troy himſelf, he could aſſure him, did not believe this, however what he had written ought to be interpreted.—Dr. Troy knew very well, that he would as probably be damned for not riding on horſeback!—The hon. gentleman had ſaid that he cared not for their adoration of ſaints and the Virgin Mary—but that he ſeriouſly feared the power of the Pope! and that it was on that ground that he would not admit them into the conſtitution. In this opinion too the hon. and learned gentleman was ſingular, for he was certain there was ſcarcely another man in the kingdom who was afraid of the Pope! His holineſs was indeed almoſt the only man in Europe whom no body was afraid of, and who was afraid of every body: his holineſs the Pope! who can with difficulty preſerve his wretched dominions; his holineſs the Pope! who can ſcarcely keep the mob of Rome from tearing him from his chair; his holineſs the Pope formidable to the houſe of Hanover ſeated on the throne of the Britiſh empire! His hon. friend feared the powers of the Pope, while another right hon. gentleman blamed the right hon. Bart. who ſupported the bill for laughing at his holineſs, be-

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cauſe indeed his holineſs had been too much in the habit of being laughed out of countenance!

An hon. member had aſſerted that his right hon. friend who introduced the bill had evaded the queſtion; he had aſſerted that the bill went to repeal the bill of rights, and that any who ſhould act under the bill would incur the penalties of premunire. If we judged from the confidence with which the hon. gentleman had made theſe aſſertions, one would be led to imagine he *knew* ſomething of the ſubject on which he had decided ſo peremptorily—on a little conſideration, however, it appeared the hon. gentleman did not know any thing of the matter—for if he had he would have known (tho' he could not much depend on the hon. gentleman's explanation of an act of parliament) that none of theſe penalties would attach to the perſon acting under the bill if it ſhould paſs: and what had the bill of rights to do with this bill? Juſt as much as his holineſs the Pope, of whom another learned member was ſo much afraid. The bill of rights enacted (though in fact it enacted nothing in this country) certain oaths; thoſe of allegiance and ſupremacy—but theſe were part of the compact entered into between the crown and the people of Great Britain—the word "Ireland" never occurred in this ſtatute, though in every Britiſh ſtatute ſuppoſed to bind Ireland it did occur.—But at any rate did gentlemen mean to ſay that the obligation of the ſtatute was eternally binding, and that the parliament of that day had power to bind all poſterity for ever? It was a monſtrous doctrine—gentlemen did not ſee the length to which it would carry them; for if the deciſion of that parliament was binding for ever in that inſtance, it was binding for ever in all other caſes without exception.

As little had the coronation oath to do with this bill—for that oath was enacted before the laws were paſſed, which this bill would repeal—yet by the magic of argument gentlemen found a way of making this oath binding on the monarch to the obſervance of laws which were not enacted until three years afterward.—No! the coronation oath did not bind the King *not* to aſſent to ſuch laws as ſhould be enacted, but it bound him to execute thoſe laws which ſhould be enacted to preſerve the Proteſtant religion, and to ſecure to the biſhops their churches, &c. Could any gentleman ſeriouſly believe that this oath tied up the King in his legiſlative capacity? It would be a ſtrange conſtitution indeed which could be guilty of ſuch abſurdity! unqueſtionably it was in his executive capacity only that this oath reſtrained him; no men were ever ſo prepoſterous as to think of binding up one branch of the legiſlature by oath to all futurity.

The Hon. Gentleman has obſerved, that before this ſeſſion of parliament, the country had been quiet—and he has looked reproach at this ſide of the Houſe, for he has not ventured openly to expreſs his idea, that it was proteſtant ambition which had plunged the country into tumult. He would tell that Hon. Gentleman that it was not proteſtant ambition, nor catholic ambition, nor any thing which had been done by any man in that Houſe, which had plunged

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he country into tumult; but he would inform the Hon. Gentleman what it was that had excited tumult—it was *miniſterial duplicity*. The Hon. Gentleman, if he is a confidential miniſter, as he affects to be, knows what had ſuggeſted it, which had produced the diſorders. The Hon. Member has ſaid it is not ſurpriſing that the proteſtants have not expreſſed their ſentiments on this meaſure—for, ſaid he, did not Lord Fitzwilliam receive multiplied addreſſes on the ſubject, and did he not anſwer each of them in a pamphlet?" Is this a juſt repreſentation which the Hon. Member gives of the proteſtants of Ireland? Are they ſo mean that they do not expreſs their feeling on a moſt intereſting meaſure, becauſe a Lord Lieutenant or his ſecretary happens to think differently from them? Are theſe the bold, the high-minded proteſtants? If that Hon. Member means to compliment them, I fear they will not thank him much for the manner which he has taken of doing it. But why did not the Hon. Member himſelf raiſe his voice even ſoftly againſt the meaſure, when he obſerved the viceroy, about to carry it? The Hon. Gentleman is ſometimes all gentleneſs, though now he is all fierceneſs—why did he not hint in one of his gentle moods his diſapprobation of an adminiſtration whom he obſerved about to repeal the Bill of Rights and avert the proteſtant eſtabliſhment? Why did he ſecond an addreſs to this very Viceroy, and go on acting with his treacherous miniſters who were betraying the country?

Gentlemen who have ſpoken againſt the bill, proffer their lives and fortunes in ſupport of the church and conſtitution. It is a brave offer—but it is a very ſafe one too, for the gentlemen know as well as I do, that they will never be called on for either. For my own part, without making ſuch pompous profeſſions, I am as much a friend to both the church and the conſtitution as they are, and if I thought that this bill would in the ſmalleſt degree endanger either, I would be the firſt to reject it. But I know there is no ſuch danger—I know that the catholics have neither any intereſt in overturning either, nor any wiſh to do it—and if they had I know they have not the power.

Much has been ſaid of ſupporting the proteſtant intereſt.—What do gentlemen mean by that word? Do they mean by ſupporting the proteſtant intereſt to protect the property of proteſtants, or the lives of proteſtants? If this be their meaning I moſt heartily adopt their ſentiment, and profeſs myſelf as warm and hearty as they are in that cauſe.——But if, by the proteſtant intereſt they mean an excluſive enjoyment of the benefits of the conſtitution by proteſtants, I am no ſupporter of the proteſtant intereſt. The time of excluſive enjoyment ſeems to be paſt, and I think, therefore, the time for adopting ſuch a bill as this is now come. It appears wonderful that there is any man who does not ſee this. To no Member of this houſe do I mean to attribute improper motives, but I cannot help ſaying, that the reaſons which have been urged againſt this bill come from another country. This interference of that country on the preſent occaſion I think has ariſen from one of two motives—either a wiſh to colour the recal of Lord Fitzwilliam, or to keep

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this country weak by keeping it divided.—This policy, I had hoped, was paſt in Great Britain. The wiſhed project of fomenting religious diſſentions, in order to facilitate the management of Ireland, certainly once exiſted, and is acknowledged and inculcated by a man of eminent character in Great Britain, and a ſtaunch whig.—The perſon I allude to is Biſhop Burnet, who ſays (I have not his words written, but I think I have an accurate recollection of them,)—"Some perſons about this time raiſed in Ireland the "humour of whig and tory; but it deſerves to be conſidered whe-"ther it be for the intereſt of England that there ſhould be any "diſtinction known in that country, but the diſtinction of pro-"teſtant and papiſt." Liberal as this gentleman was in whatever concerned his own country, he thought it right to keep alive the religious difference between papiſt and proteſtant, and profeſſedly for the purpoſe of weakening Ireland for the benefit of Great Britain.

Mr. Ponſonby now called on gentlemen very earneſtly, to conſider the ſituation in which they ſtood, and what had paſſed in this country recently; they had ſeen an adminiſtration encourage the proteſtant againſt the catholic pretenſions; they had ſeen the ſame adminiſtration excite the claims of thoſe ſame catholics; and, ultimately, they had ſeen that very adminiſtration, after having alternately encouraged each party againſt the other, paſs a bill in favour of thoſe catholics, in oppoſition to the ſentiments of the proteſtants, which that adminiſtration had excited. Would gentlemen be humble enough to continue playing this game? If not, there was but one way to avoid it, and that was to put an end to the poſſibility of difference between the two deſcriptions, by adopting the catholics into the boſom of the conſtitution, and thus bleſs and exalt the country.

The Hon. Mr. STEWART roſe to make a few remarks on the adminiſtration of Lord Fitzwilliam, and on the pamphlets publiſhed, containing his lordſhip's anſwers to the addreſſes of the Roman Catholics. He ſaid he did not conſider that any gentleman, who was not really in office and reſponſible, could with propriety be called the miniſter. He admitted he moved an addreſs to his Majeſty, on Lord Fitzwilliam's being appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland.

Mr. CURRAN ſaid he meant, not at that late hour, to trouble the houſe at large on the queſtion. He had from the firſt been a friend to the deliverance of the catholics. He thought their claims irreſiſtable on every principle of policy and juſtice.

He had more than once given his reaſons for that opinion. It was not neceſſary then to repeat them. Never did a cauſe ſtand leſs in need of additional defence. Very little therefore would he now add; particularly as the ſpeech of a right hon. gentleman had made it manifeſt that gentlemen had come with their minds prepared upon the ſubject, and that it was a queſtion of diviſion, and not of debate.

bate. He felt himſelf forced, he ſaid, to riſe to ſet right ſome things that had been aſſerted in the debate. An hon. and learned gentleman had been pleaſed to mix the names of the catholics with that of Mr. Jackſon, who was lately tried for treaſon. It was only juſtice to that body of our fellow-ſubjects to ſay, in the preſence of the Attorney General, who conducted that proſecution, that not one ſyllable was ſaid upon that trial, nor did any circumſtance whatſoever appear, that could warrant even a ſuſpicion of the moſt diſtant intercourſe between any one catholic and that unfortunate man; and he was glad of being able to make that aſſertion in that public place, in order that if any calumny of that ſort ſhould be ever uttered againſt them, it might be known to be moſt malicious and unfounded. He adverted very pointedly on the impropriety of talking ſo familiarly of the names of individuals in parliament. It was, he ſaid, abuſing the abſent, who ought to have at leaſt the opportunity of anſwering—or of ſaying, what they probably would ſay, that they thought ſuch aſperſions unworthy of reply. It was alſo, he ſaid, aſſerted, that the bill was penned in a particular quarter, on which the learned gentleman had been very liberal of contemptuous language—He begged to aſſure him he was miſtaken; the bill was not penned by thoſe perſons.

If it was blameable, it was only juſt to ſay where the guilt was chargeable. Part of the guilt, he ſaid, was with himſelf—he had aſſiſted in framing that bill. The right hon. mover had the greater part of the guilt to anſwer for; he was at a loſs, however, to find out in what that guilt conſiſted. He had thought of it much, but he could not find out the criminality. The nation was of his opinion—every perſuaſion was of his opinion; he was convinced, therefore, not of its guilt, but of its juſtice. He was ſatisfied that if Ireland was to be ſaved, it could be done only by the emancipation of the catholics, and the union of the people. It is no longer, he ſaid, a queſtion between the proteſtants and the catholics, but between the miniſter and the country; the mode of the debate had ſhewn this. Gentlemen had not even touched upon the firſt arguments upon which they had formerly ſupported their oppoſition—namely, the danger to property. They had this night confined themſelves to idle aſperſions on the perſons of the catholics, or to idle boaſting of their own loyalty and orthodox. For his own part, he ſaid, he thought there was no great merit in having the one, nor any great certainty of having the other to boaſt of. If he was not convinced the preſent bill was perfectly reconcileable with both, he ſhould not think of giving it the warm ſupport which he had, and would while he lived continue to give it.

He felt himſelf, he ſaid, falling into the merits of the debate, contrary to his reſolution when he roſe. He had heard a learned gentleman uſe a very celebrated and reſpected name in a moſt extraordinary manner. He had heard ſomething like it before; he had let it paſs unnoticed. He was unwilling to riſe as the advocate of that gentleman's perſon or character; they were too high above ſuch cenſure to require defence.—There might have ſeemed

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as much egotiſm as zeal or reſpect in taking the province of his de-
fender; but he could not, for the honour of the houſe, ſuffer an
idea to go abroad, that the name of Mr. Edmund Burke had been
treated with diſreſpect, without expreſſing the ſtrongeſt indignation
at ſuch a breach of decorum. He ſhould lament that this houſe
could be thought ſo dead to all ſenſe of ſuch exalted merit, as
tamely to endure a language, the diſgrace of which could fall only
on themſelves. But he ſaid it ſeemed to be a night of unmerited
imputation. A young member (Mr. Stuart) had been pleaſed to
ſay he hoped the preſent adminiſtration would relieve this country
from the bad conduct of the laſt. It was a ſubject on which he
would enter the liſts with the hon. member. He was ſorry, he
ſaid, ſo young a man could entertain ſo mean an opinion of the
houſe, as to uſe ſuch language.

He was ſurpriſed that the young member ſhould, at ſo early an
age, give the houſe credit for ſo much levity and inconſiſtency as
they muſt poſſeſs, if they ſhould liſten quietly to ſuch an aſperſion
on the character of a Viceroy whom they had declared unanimouſly
to deſerve the thanks of that houſe, and the confidence of the peo-
ple. As for his part, he ſaid, he ſhould think it time very much
miſpent to go into any detail of that noble Lord's merits with
this country; he rather regretted the conſequences of their being
ſo univerſally felt as they were.

Mr. Curran then adverted to an obſervation of the ſame hon.
member, of office without reſponſibility or place; it was a circum-
ſtance he confeſſed, which marked the government of Lord Fitz-
william. He ſaw not much likelihood of its being repeated. It
would, he feared, be as difficult to find the ſame talents, as the
diſintereſtedneſs of the right hon. member to whom the gentleman had
alluded; he had lent his great powers to his country without the
emolument of office. He was ſorry to find the hon. young mem-
ber not more ſenſible of that merit.—As he advanced in years, he
truſted that he would think more juſtly, and perhaps improve ſo
much as to make a ſplendid model the object of more reſpect—per-
haps of imitation. He would take the liberty of ſaying to him

Diſce, Puer, virtutem ex illo,
Verumque laborem;
Fortunam ex aliis.

Dr. DUIGENAN roſe to explain, that what he had ſaid relative
to Mr. Burke, was from what appeared in the public newſpapers.

At about ten o'clock in the morning Sir J. BLAQUIERE roſe.
He ſaid, if he had offered himſelf to the attention of the Houſe
at an earlier hour, he ſhould have ſtated at length what he would
now do in few words, that the bill under their conſideration made
only a part of one extenſive and well-digeſted ſyſtem for an entire
change of the conſtitution, leading, through the medium of
reform in parliament, to a ſeparation or an union; and he heſitated
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the leſs in ſaying ſo, as he was convinced by what the learned Doctor (Dr. Duigenan) had ſtated, that this bill was not the work of the Right Honorable Member who introduced it, but came from a ſet of men the moſt deſpicable and dangerous in ſociety—not from the reſpectable body of the catholics, whom all men revered. He ſhould at an earlier hour have taken ſome pains to convince the Houſe of the truth of this poſition; but in the debate gentlemen had ſaved him that trouble, openly avowing the deſign of grafting upon the preſent meaſure, a radical reform of the repreſentation of the people in parliament.

One gentleman in particular, (Mr. O'Connor) had ſaid it with more eloquence than diſcretion.—Sir J. B. then adverting to the preſent ſituation of the kingdom, obſerved, an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. G. Ponſonby) had taken a freedom with his own friends, which he ſhould not have ventured to have ſuggeſted; for if to the duplicity of adminiſtration the preſent diſturbances were to be aſcribed, it could not poſſibly attach upon Lord Camden's, whoſe government was inſulted on the very day of his landing, ſo that it muſt have been Lord Fitzwilliam's adminiſtration which the honorable and learned gentleman had alluded to.—Several gentlemen had inſinuated, for that was now the faſhion in ſpeaking as well as writing, (alluding we ſuppoſe to Lord Fitzwilliam's letters) that had Lord Fitzwilliam continued in the government, this bill would have met with a better fate than was likely to attend it at the preſent moment. He begged the Houſe to indulge him when he ventured to mention ſo inconſiderable a perſon as himſelf; that nobleman had with great condeſcenſion and breeding hearkened to his opinion upon the ſubject, and he had explicitly ſtated to his Excellency his determination to reſiſt the meaſure, the truth of which could be readily verified if certain gentlemen preſent ſhould think it worth their while to enquire. But a ſtronger argument could not be adduced than the very warm ſupport it had this night received from gentlemen in office, and in the confidence of government. It was upon its principle he ſhould reſiſt this dangerous innovation—but he ſhould oppoſe it alſo on its mode of entering the Houſe, and on other grounds. Petitions dictated by the ſocieties in Dublin, brought forward by the body in maſs, meant ſomething more than ſupplications.—There was no difference in his mind between the highwayman and the beggar, but in the mode of aſking; the one implores relief for his ſtarving children; the other, with a piſtol at your breaſt, ſays he is the younger ſon of a very good family, and if you do not deliver your money, he muſt ſtarve himſelf—and would gentlemen in their ſenſes put arms into the hands of theſe people, (as enacted by the preſent bill) at a moment when, according to his judgment, it is become the duty of the executive government to take from them all the arms they have, at leaſt, in the diſturbed counties.—It was much comfort to him, he ſaid, that the meaſure was brought to its criſis—a long and inſtructive debate had taken place;—the thing was now without a maſk—the proteſtant power was to be put down—but he bleſſed his God, the proteſ-

taxts had not given up that power yet—no—they had the power ſtill in their hands—they had a good cauſe to defend—and the throne of their king to rally to, in caſe of need; and under theſe circumſtances, he truſted, they would not be ſo mad, as to part with the ſmalleſt particle of their preſent conſideration.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL cloſed the debate with a few words, in ſtrong and deciſive terms, againſt the bill;

And the queſtion being loudly called for on all ſides, the Houſe divided at half after ten o'clock on Tueſday morning, the 5th of May, when the numbers for the rejection were

Ayes—155.———Noes—84.

Tellers for the Ayes, Lord KINGSBOROUGH, and the Rt. Hon. Mr. CUFFE.

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY, and Mr. MAURICE FITZGERALD.

APPENDIX.

To put the Reader in complete poſſeſſion of the ſubject of the foregoing Debate, the Petition of the Catholics, and the Bill, are annexed.

To the Right Honourable and Honourable the Knights, Citizens and Burgeſſes in Parliament aſſembled.

THE

PETITION

OF

The underſigned, on Behalf of themſelves and others his Majeſty's Catholic Subjects of the City of Dublin *,

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT in purſuance of his Majeſty's moſt gracious and paternal recommendation of the ſituation of his Catholic ſubjects of this kingdom to the wiſdom and liberality of his parliament, this honourable houſe was, in the courſe of the ſeſſion of 1793, pleaſed to remove many of the diſabilities, pains and penalties under which the Catholics of Ireland had ſo long laboured, by a repeal of divers ſevere and oppreſſive laws peculiarly affecting that body. That while your petitioners feel the deepeſt and moſt lively ſenſe of the wiſdom and goodneſs of parliament, manifeſted in the repeal of the ſaid penal and reſtrictive ſtatutes, they cannot in juſtice to themſelves refrain from moſt humbly ſubmitting, that the Catholics of Ireland have been and ſtill are, in a number and variety of inſtances, prevented from enjoying the full benefit of the conſtitution of their country, by the exiſtence of certain diſabilities and reſtraints which your petitioners do now, with all humility and deference, preſume to hope, on every principle, as well of expediency as of juſtice, it will no longer be thought neceſſary to retain. That your petitioners do moſt humbly preſume to ſuggeſt to the wiſdom of this honourable houſe, that the moſt effectual mode to unite in ſentiment all his Majeſty's ſubjects of Ireland in ſupport of our moſt excellent conſtitution, agreeably to his gracious and paternal wiſh, will be to extend to them its bleſſings, by the abolition of thoſe incapacities and diſqualifications of which your petitioners preſume moſt humbly to complain. Your petitioners therefore moſt humbly pray that this honourable houſe, taking the ſituation of your petitioners into conſideration, their loyalty to their ſovereign, their reſpect to the legiſlature, and dutiful and obedient ſubmiſſion to the laws, may be pleaſed to reſtore them to a full enjoyment of the bleſſings of our moſt excellent conſtitution, by a repeal of all the penal and reſtrictive laws now affecting the Catholics of Ireland.

And your petitioners will pray.

* This Petition is the ſame as thoſe preſented from the Catholics of the ſeveral counties, towns, &c. throughout the kingdom.

A B I L L

FOR

The further Relief of his Majeſty's Popiſh or Roman Catholic Subjects of Ireland.

WHEREAS by an act of parliament paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act for the relief of his Majeſty's popiſh or Roman Catholic ſubjects of Ireland, ſeveral reſtraints, diſabilities and incapacities to which his Majeſty's ſubjects in this kingdom being papiſts, or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion had been ſubjected were removed, but his Majeſty's ſaid ſubjects ſtill remain under certain other reſtraints, diſabilities and incapacities which it is right and expedient to remove: therefore,

Be it enacted, by the King's moſt excellent Majeſty, by and with the advice and conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this preſent parliament aſſembled, and by the authority of the ſame, that ſo much of the ſaid act paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign as requires Papiſts or Roman Catholics poſſeſſing a freehold eſtate of ten pounds yearly and leſs than one hundred pounds, or a perſonal eſtate of three hundred pounds and leſs than one thouſand pounds; to take at the ſeſſion of the peace in the county in which they reſide, the oath of allegiance preſcribed to be taken by an act of parliament paſſed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his preſent Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act to enable his Majeſty's ſubjects of whatever perſuaſion to teſtify their allegiance to him, and alſo in an open court, to ſwear and ſubſcribe an affidavit that they are poſſeſſed of a freehold eſtate, yielding a clear yearly profit to the perſon making the ſame, of ten pounds, or a perſonal property of three hundred pounds above his juſt debts, and the name and nature of ſuch freehold, in order to authorize ſuch perſons to keep and uſe arms and ammunition as proteſtants may, be and the ſame is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, that it ſhall and may be lawful for Papiſts or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion, who ſhall have at the ſeſſions of peace in the county in which ſuch perſons reſpectively reſide, taken and ſubſcribed the oath of allegiance preſcribed to be taken by the ſaid act, paſſed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act to enable his Majeſty's ſubjects of whatever perſuaſion, to teſtify their allegiance to him, and alſo the oath and declaration ſet forth in and preſcribed to be taken by the ſaid act, paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act for the relief of his Majeſty's Popiſh or Roman Catholic ſubjects of Ireland, on which the clerk of the peace ſhall have for his trouble a fee of ſix-pence, to keep and uſe arms and ammunition as proteſtants may now by law, any ſtatute to the contrary notwithſtanding.

And be it enacted, that ſo much of the ſaid act paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, as provides and enacts that nothing therein contained ſhall extend, or be conſtrued to extend, to enable any perſon to ſit or vote in either houſes of parliament, or to hold, exerciſe or enjoy, the office of Lord High Chancellor, Lord High Treaſurer, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Chief Juſtice of the Court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Juſtice of the Court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, or Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, Maſter or Keeper of the Rolls, Secretary of State, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Vice-Treaſurer, or Deputy Vice-Treaſurer, Teller and Caſhier of the Exchequer, or Auditor General, Lieutenant or Governor, or Cuſtos Rotulorum of Counties, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Deputy, or

or other Chief Governor or Governors of this Kingdom, Member of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council, Prime Serjeant, Attorney General, Solicitor General, ſecond and third Serjeant at Law, or King's Counſel, Maſter in Chancery, Poſt Maſter General, Maſter and Lieutenant General of his Majeſty's Ordnance, Commander in Chief of his Majeſty's Forces, Generals on the Staff, and Sheriffs and Sub-Sheriffs of any county in this Kingdom, or any Office contrary to the rules, orders and directions made and eſtabliſhed by the Lord Lieutenant and Council, in purſuance of the act paſſed in the ſeventeenth and eighteenth years of the reign of king Charles the ſecond, entitled, an act for explaining of ſome doubts ariſing upon an act, entitled, an act for the better execution of his Majeſty's gracious declaration for the ſettlement of his kingdom of Ireland, and ſatisfaction of the ſeveral intereſts of adventurers, ſoldiers and other his ſubjects there, and for making ſome alterations of and additions unto the ſaid act, for the more ſpeedy and effectual ſettlement of this kingdom, unleſs he ſhall have taken, made and ſubſcribed the oaths and declaration, and performed the ſeveral requiſites which by any act heretofore made and now of force, are required to enable any perſon to ſit or vote, or hold or exerciſe and enjoy the ſaid offices reſpectively, be and the ſame is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, that it ſhall and may be lawful for Papiſts or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion, to ſit and vote in either houſe of parliament, and to hold, exerciſe and enjoy the offices of Lord High Chancellor, Lord High Treaſurer, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Chief Juſtice of the Court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Juſtice of the Court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, or Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, Maſter or Keeper of the Rolls, Secretary of State, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Vice-Treaſurer or Deputy Vice-Treaſurer, Teller and Caſhier of the Exchequer, or Auditor-General, Lieutenant or Governor or Cuſtos Rotulorum of Counties, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Deputy or other Chief Governor or Governors of this kingdom, Member of his Majeſty's Moſt Honourable Privy Council, Prime Serjeant, Attorney General, Solicitor General, ſecond and third Serjeant at Law, or King's Counſel, Maſter in Chancery, Poſt-Maſter General, Maſter and Lieutenant-General of his Majeſty's Ordnance, Commander in Chief of his Majeſty's Forces, Generals on the Staff, and Sheriffs and Sub-Sheriffs of any county or county of a town or city in this kingdom, or to be members of any lay body corporate, or to hold any office in any lay corporation, which they are, or may be excluded by the rules, orders and directions made and eſtabliſhed by the Lord Lieutenant and Council, in purſuance of the act paſſed in the ſeventeenth and eighteenth years of the reign of King Charles the ſecond, entitled, an act for explaining ſome doubts ariſing upon an act, entitled, an act for the better execution of his Majeſty's gracious declaration for the ſettlement of his kingdom of Ireland, and ſatisfaction of the ſeveral intereſts of adventurers, ſoldiers, and other his ſubjects there, and for making ſome alterations of, and additions unto the ſaid act, for the more ſpeedy and effectual ſettlement of this kingdom, without taking and ſubſcribing the oaths of allegiance, ſupremacy or abjuration, or making or ſubſcribing the declaration required to be taken, made and ſubſcribed, to enable any perſon to hold and enjoy any of ſuch places, and alſo without receiving the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper according to the rites and ceremonies of the church of Ireland, any law, ſtatute, or bye law of any corporation to the contrary notwithſtanding.

Provided always, that every ſuch perſon take and ſubſcribe the ſaid oath appointed by the ſaid act, paſſed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act to enable his Majeſty's ſubjects of whatever perſuaſion to teſtify their allegiance to him; and alſo the ſaid oath and declaration ſet forth and preſcribed in the ſaid act, paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, entitled, an act for the relief of his Majeſty's Popiſh or Roman Catholic ſubjects of Ireland.

And be it enacted, that ſo much of an act paſſed in the eighth year of the reign of her late Majeſty Anne, entitled, an act for explaining and amending an act, entitled, an act to prevent the further growth of popery, as enacts, that whatſoever perſon of the Popiſh religion ſhall publicly teach ſchool or ſhall inſtruct youth

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learning in any private houſe within this realm, or ſhall be entertained to inſtruct youth in learning, as uſher, under maſter or aſſiſtant by any proteſtant ſchool-maſter, ſhall be eſteemed and taken to be a Popiſh regular clergyman, and be proſecuted as ſuch, and incur ſuch pains, penalties and forfeitures as any Popiſh regular convict is liable unto by the laws and ſtatutes of this realm, and which enacts, that no perſon whatſoever, after the firſt day of November, one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, ſhall be qualified to teach or keep ſchool publicly, or teach and inſtruct youth in learning in any private houſe, or as uſher or aſſiſtant to any proteſtant ſchool-maſter, who ſhall not firſt, or at the next general aſſizes or general quarter ſeſſions of the peace, to be held for the county where ſuch perſon ſhall inhabit or reſide, after ſuch perſon is ſo entertained, take the oath of allegiance, and make and ſubſcribe the declaration, and take and ſubſcribe the oath of abjuration, as in the act therein mentioned is directed and expreſſed, and as inflicts any forfeiture on any perſon who ſhall offend therein, or any perſon who ſhall entertain any one not qualified as aforeſaid, as tutor, under-maſter, uſher or aſſiſtant, be and the ſame is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, that ſo much of the ſaid act paſſed the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, as provides that any college to be thereafter founded in this kingdom, in which it ſhall be lawful for Papiſts or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion to hold or to take degrees or profeſſorſhips, or to be maſters or fellows, ſhall be a member of the Univerſity of Dublin, and ſhall not be founded excluſively for the education of Papiſts or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion, and ſhall not conſiſt excluſively of maſters, fellows or other perſons to be named or elected on the foundation of ſuch college, being perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion, ſhall be, and the ſame is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, that ſo much of an act paſſed in the twenty-firſt and twenty-ſecond years of the reign of his preſent Majeſty, entitled, an act to allow perſons profeſſing the Popiſh religion to teach ſchool in this kingdom, and for regulating the education of papiſts; and alſo to repeal parts of certain laws relative to the guardianſhip of their children, as provides that nothing therein ſhall extend or be conſtrued to extend to any Popiſh ſchool-maſter who ſhould receive into his ſchool any perſon of the Proteſtant religion, or to any perſon of the Popiſh religion who ſhould be entertained to inſtruct youth in learning, as uſher, under-maſter or aſſiſtant, by any proteſtant ſchool-maſter within this realm, ſhall be, and the ſame is hereby repealed,

And be it enacted, that ſo much of a clauſe in the ſaid act paſſed in the thirty-third year of his Majeſty's reign, as incapacitates any Papiſt or perſon profeſſing the Popiſh religion to vote at any pariſh-veſtry at the election of a church-warden, be and the ſame is hereby repealed.

And be it enacted, that it ſhall and may be lawful for any Papiſt or perſon profeſſing the Popiſh religion, to vote at any pariſh veſtry, at the election of a church-warden, any law to the contrary thereof notwithſtanding.

And be it further enacted, that it ſhall and may be lawful for Papiſts or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh or Roman Catholic religion, ſerving as commiſſioned and non-commiſſioned officers or ſoldiers in his Majeſty's regular forces within this kingdom, to attend the celebration of divine worſhip according to the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church, in as full and free a manner as proteſtants, being officers or ſoldiers are now permitted to attend the celebration of divine ſervice according to the rites of the church of Ireland, any law, ſtatute, cuſtom or uſage to the contrary notwithſtanding.

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